

JAMES HAIN FRISWELL

A MEMOIR



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JAMES HAIN FRISWELL

A Memoir

BY HIS DAUGHTER

LAURA HAIN FRISWELL

(MRS. AMBROSE MYALL)

WITH THREE PLATES

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P R E F A C E

I HAVE several times been asked by many well-known people why a Life of my father has not been written, and, in these days of interviewing anybody and everybody, it no doubt seems curious that no authentic record has been given to the world of one who did his best to elevate and teach the people, and who wrote one of the most widely read and popular books of the century. It has been through no wish on my part to hide my father's name or fame, but because I doubted my own capacity, and because I have no account of his life except a few stray notes in his diaries and the remembrance of some stories of his youth. He was not a man to talk of himself, and he has left not a line of autobiography.

I can remember him, when I was a very small girl, playing with my brother and me, and telling us wonderful stories, which I have since related to many children—"The History of Rantipole Jones and the Wolves," of "Tom Drum," of "Willie Sweetstuff and the Ogre Policeman," "The Shocking Story of the Jumble Family,"
v b

and many other romances, told with such verve and vigour that they have never faded from my memory. "The Parlour Window," in "Other People's Windows," gives a very true account of this time. I can remember him the life and soul of many an entertainment, both at home and abroad. In those days I sat with my mother and governess listening to many men and women who were then, or have since made themselves, well known in literature, art, science, or the drama. I was an only daughter, and not strong. I could not go to school or join in any active games with those of my own age, so my amusements were, while still a school-girl, writing children's stories for *The Quiver*, going to the theatre, and, as a great treat, to the Literary Fund dinners. There my mother and I heard all the most eloquent speakers of the day, and met in the drawing-room most of the celebrated men of the time, many of whom would kindly come and talk to me for a few minutes. Amongst these were Dickens, Charles Reade, Anthony Trollope, Frederick Locker, Yates, Sala, and many more. My father was a conspicuous figure amongst them, a charming companion, full of wit and humour, with graphic descriptive powers and a wonderful memory.

Again, I can remember him the victim of a wasting disease, a great invalid, for days con-

fined to his bed, but always hopeful, cheerful, patient, and kind; a most excellent husband and father, and still an entertaining companion. Thus it is in his domestic character that I can best recall him. But to the world he was well known as a satirist, novelist, and essayist, a true scholar, and an earnest, kindly man, with—to quote what Mr. Percy Fitzgerald says of him in his “Memoirs of an Author”—“a fine ideal of what was honourable and loyal.”

I have read “Memoirs” which consist of bald records of travels, public dinners, and other functions. Such things occur in the lives of most public men; they are all much alike, and have been written about to such an extent that the subject must be somewhat boring to the general public; nor do they record a man’s life: it is the everyday incidents that make our lives. Therefore, I scarcely mention my father’s journeys or dinners, but I have tried to give a picture of those who surrounded him—his family and his friends.

I have heard it stated that he was always delicate. This is an error; he was five feet nine inches in height and robust-looking, he was thirty-eight inches round the chest, and all the doctors who saw him said that “with such a chest he should not have had anything the matter with his lungs.” But he caught cold

very easily ; writing is not a healthy occupation, and he worked too hard.

I wish to thank Lady Hardman, Mrs. Harrison, Mrs. Blackburn, Miss Kingsley, Mr. Justin McCarthy, Canon Duckworth, Professor Herkomer, Mr. Sydney Grundy, Mr. Dillon Croker, and all who have kindly sent me letters or given me their permission to print letters from their relatives. My thanks are also due to Mr. H. P. Robinson for the use of his fine photograph of my father. My mother, who has looked over hundreds of letters, and done all she could to help me, I have no need to thank ; to her it has been, as to me, a labour of love. I have only to add that in this book I hope I have shown how good and brave a man my father was, how helpful to others, what a high ideal he had of the dignity of letters, how indefatigable was his industry in many things as well as literature, and how strong his love for the working classes, whose interests he had ever at heart, and of whose education he never lost sight.

If my readers fail to see this in the *Life* before them, I beg them to believe the fault is mine alone.

LAURA HAIN FRISWELL.

ABER MAW, WIMBLEDON.

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JAMES HAIN FRISWELL

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JAMES HAIN FRISWELL was born at Forton, near Newport, in Shropshire, on the 8th of May 1825. He was the youngest but one (a girl) of a family of five. His eldest brother was twelve years his senior, and on him it devolved to write and inform his father, who was in London, of his brother's birth. I have the letter now before me, and it seems to me strangely pathetic, so I quote it :—

“MY DEAR PAPA,—I write to inform you that another helpless little boy claims your protection. He was born on Sunday night, between twelve and one. He is the express Image of Fanny when she was born, but less, however, he appears Healthy and strong; he is baptised James. Since we were able to lisp we have been taught to pray for *you* ;

even little Dick prays God bless papa. We go to Mrs. Fisher's to-morrow; she has invited Dick and all to be a little out of Mamma's way; we fear you are unwell, as you have not written, as you promised, to our poor Mamma. Fanny and Dick join me in love and kisses to dear papa.—Your dutiful son,

“WILLIAM FRISWELL.”

This letter, with its beautiful penmanship, its fine up-strokes and well-formed letters, in which are the long s's of a bygone day, its only mistakes being a capital here and there, which may have been done to emphasise the young writer's feelings, was written to a man who had not much tenderness or fatherly affection, as its quaint expressions show.

William Friswell, senior, was a solicitor, of Wimpole Street, London, a clever lawyer, and a most upright and honourable man as far as business was concerned. His clients were mostly titled people, and his business was large and lucrative. He was fond of boasting that the family was of Norman extraction and came over with the Conqueror—a harmless fancy shared by many people, and that may or may not be true; but, at any rate, according to a book entitled “The Norman People and their Existing Descendants in the British Dominions and the United States of America,”

published by Henry S. King in 1874, "Friswell or Fritzville is armorially identified with Freshfield, and they are descended from Ralph de Fressonville, who in the year 1225 seized the estates and barony of Hubert Fitz-Ralph in Notts and Derby. The chief seat of the barony was in Notts. The family of the Barons Freschville long continued." So, no doubt, my grandfather was right in saying we are Normans. In these democratic days we think of little but money, but in those days *family* was considered something to be proud of, and my grandfather was a gentleman of the old school. He was proud of his brother, Captain J. R. Friswell, who fell in June 1824, at the final capture of Rangoon. He (the Captain) was engaged to a niece of the great Duke of Wellington; we have a miniature of the lady in a very low dress, her waist under her armpits; she is playing a spinet, and her hair, woven into a cable, encircles the portrait. It belonged to the poor Captain, who attained the rank of Brevet-Major ere he died.

My grandfather's pride in his family did not induce him to lead an exemplary life; he thought of himself, not of his wife and children, and was extravagant and tyrannical in his domestic

character. My grandmother had a large family, of whom three sons and two daughters survived. My father was the youngest son, and was christened James only ; Hain was his mother's maiden name, and he vowed he would make it as well known as that of Friswell.

My grandmother was of a good old county family, and came from Bath ; the old beau, Pea-green Hain, was some remote connection of hers.

My father was devoted to his mother, who from his earliest childhood had been in the habit of reading and repeating legends and old English ballads to him, and from her he inherited his taste for literature. He was a very small, delicate, quick child, so precocious that Mr. Pinnock, his eldest brother's tutor, taught him to construe Virgil at eight years of age ; and on his going to school at Aspley, in Bedfordshire, the Rev. Dr. Pain, his master, continued his classical education, making him almost as good a classical scholar as himself.

At school he got into disgrace with boys of his own age and size because he knew more than they did, and they resented so young a boy being put above them, while those in his class looked down upon him and laughed at him for being so little. They soon found the small boy had "plenty of

pluck," that he was quick, passionate, and courageous, not afraid to fight, although ignorant of the art; but he was soon instructed by being told to keep firm on his legs, watch his enemy's eye, and hit out straight from the shoulder, which instructions he followed with great success, and soon had a quieter life.

In "Out and About," a story for boys, there is an account of his first fight and of his school, the kind and wise Dr. Leatherby of the story being the Rev. Dr. Pain.

Some of his schoolfellows have told me he was a most vivacious and mischievous boy. Once he and his brother arrived at Bletchley too late for the coach. My father did not approve of a carrier's cart—it was not a stylish conveyance—so he ordered a post-chaise. As they drove up to the school Dr. Pain came out to the gate, expecting to receive some important man. His disgust was great, when two small boys of eight and ten crept out, very frightened at seeing the Doctor. The result was not pleasant, and it was extremely unpleasant when the hire of the post-chaise duly appeared in the bill.

Another time, he persuaded Wad Wroth, a boy much older and bigger than himself (afterwards

the Rev. Warwick Wroth, vicar of St. Philip's, Clerkenwell, and the first man to put on vestments), to make an idol of slate-pencil and to compel the bully of the school to fall down and worship it. When the bully had been forced upon his knees and made to repeat a prayer, they told him he would be "damned for ever." This was a revenge worthy a Red Indian Brave.

Once in the holidays, he and his brother Richard were found upon the garden wall, with a flower-pot attached to some string, which they ingeniously let down into a neighbour's garden and thus hooked off his peaches. My grandmother took her husband's riding-whip from the hall and made both the young culprits march before her into the next house, when she handed the whip to the gentleman, and requested him to thrash her sons for stealing. But the gentleman talked to them, and became a firm friend to the boys, giving them many a "tip" in after years.

My father at this time had an exaggerated idea as to the status of a lord; he appears to have thought that they walked about in coronets. This notion was no doubt drawn from the great nobles who so proudly bear their part in Shakespeare's plays. He was, therefore, greatly surprised one

day when, having been brought to town by his father, he was taken into his office in Wimpole Street, and told to sit down while his father transacted some business. Presently a gentleman was introduced, and entered into earnest conversation with his father. The gentleman was very deferential and anxious, apparently desiring help in some way which was beyond the comprehension of the small listener. But his conception of the grandeur and power of a lord received a fearful shock when his father, suddenly wheeling round in his chair and gazing sternly at his interlocutor, exclaimed, "Well, my lord, if you choose to go and dirty yourself in the City, you can't expect me to pull you out of the mess."

A characteristic note of the time—to speculate is to "dirty oneself in the City."

My father always spoke of his master, the Rev. Dr. Pain, with great admiration for his learning, and love and respect for his moral qualities. He said of him that "he was severe, but not harsh; a disciplinarian, but kindly. He studied the character of his pupils, and he did not expect so much from the dull as from the clever. Laziness he punished. Dissimulation and want of manliness he detested."

Many of the Doctor's pupils have attained eminence in the Army, Navy, and learned professions. All seemed to have loved him, though they feared him; and, long after he had retired from preaching and teaching, a small band of his pupils, of whom my father was one, used to meet and give an annual dinner to their old master at Woburn.

While my father and his elder brother were still at school, my grandfather (at the early age of forty), regardless of his children's prospects, disposed of his flourishing business, gave up Hamilton House, the large house he had built on Hamilton Terrace (the garden alone had cost him £1000), and retired into the country. He took a house at Tadworth, near Epsom, and spent his time in amateur farming and hunting. His ideas of farming were unique; he lay in bed till midday, and sat up card-playing till the small hours. He often had race-horses in his stables, once the winner of the Derby. He gave the most extravagant prices for his animals, many of them being prize beasts bought at shows. These sometimes came to sudden and untimely ends. For instance, a prize boar got out through some carelessness, and, rushing over the farm, gored several valuable cows,

which had to be slaughtered—a fate which also befell the boar, as he was considered dangerous. With a master who lay in bed half the day and sat up nearly all night, it is needless to say how the farm prospered.

My grandfather took his sons from school when the youngest was not quite sixteen, and instead of sending them to Eton or Harrow, he put the elder (Richard) with a farmer to learn farming, and my father he left to amuse or employ himself as he could. Thrown on his own resources, he spent his time in his father's library (which was, fortunately, a good one), and in wandering about Banstead Downs and the fields and lanes of Epsom, with a book in his hand. A year passed in this way, when my grandfather suddenly seemed to have awakened to the fact that his youngest son was leading an idle life. He got up early one morning, in the spring of 1842, with this idea in his head, and ordered his servants to "be quick" with his breakfast, to bring round his gig "in ten minutes," and to find Mr. James and "tell him to come at once." His orders were executed with the utmost despatch, for all dreaded his harsh and violent temper, and when my father came he found him already mounting his gig. He was told "to

jump up," which he did, and away they drove to Lewes. There the gig was put up at the best inn and a good dinner ordered, then, telling his son he might go to the top of the Castle, my grandfather went into the town.

My father went to the top of the Castle, and there found a youth of about his own age; he began to talk to him about the surrounding country, when, to his horror, the young man flung up his arms, his face became frightfully contorted, and he would have thrown himself off the tower had not my father clasped him in his arms. Then there commenced a struggle in which they were several times on the verge of both going over; they rolled on the ground together, and my father at last succeeded in holding him down; his body was fearfully convulsed, and he was foaming at the mouth. In answer to my father's loud cries for help an old man at length appeared, and looking at the youth, said calmly, "Why, he's in an epileptic fit; stay till I get some water." My father naturally did not care to stay, but he did so, and after what seemed to him an eternity, the old man returned and dashed the water over the invalid, who recovered sufficiently to be assisted downstairs, where he was left in charge of the old man. I have often heard

my father tell this story, and describe the terror he was in when he discovered that he was *alone* on the top of a tower with a madman, as he thought. When he returned to the town, he found his father in a bad temper, grumbling at everything and every one, and very angry with him for being late ; so he said nothing of his adventure, but tried to eat his dinner ; he was told “to be quick about it,” as the gig was at the door. On his way back to Epsom my grandfather informed his son why they had gone to Lewes. Then my father discovered that he had not only been in danger of losing his life, but had narrowly escaped being made a linen-draper’s assistant. My grandfather had actually gone to Lewes with the intention of putting his son with a linen-draper ; but he fortunately quarrelled with the tradesman because he said “he was a person without taste or refinement, and hadn’t an ‘h’ in his vocabulary.”

In the autumn of 1842, upon the advice of his old friend, John Mortimer, my grandfather sent his son to learn engraving. Whether my father remonstrated, or reminded him that he had promised to send him to the University and put him into one of the professions, I do not know, as he seldom spoke of his father, and never complained

of his treatment. Fortunately, Mr. John Rumley, to whom my father was articled for five years, my grandfather objecting to his being bound in the usual way, was "a man of refinement and good taste;" he was fond of literature, and especially of art. He had two daughters, and wishing them to become artists, he had them taught painting in oil by Mr. Tom Smart, a clever artist and portrait-painter; his pupils showed great aptitude, and exhibited in all the galleries, including the Royal Academy.

There are parts of London now so squalid that it seems a wonder that they were ever inhabited by respectable people; and yet, not longer ago than 1837, in Hatton Garden and the adjacent streets well-to-do merchants and gentry resided, many of the latter keeping their carriages.

In this neighbourhood there still stand some fine old houses, dating back to the time of Charles II., and in one of these my maternal grandfather lived and carried on his business. I can just remember the lofty rooms, high carved mantel-shelves, and deep window seats. The staircase was very fine and wide, and all the rooms were panelled, no doubt in oak, but they had been painted various colours. The drawing-room was on the first floor, a very large room, painted pale green; leading out of that

was my mother's and aunt's studio—its window covered up till there was only a top light. The fireplace was across one of the corners of the room, and near it stood a very large carved oak chair. I fancy I can see sitting in that chair a very tiny child, with dark blue eyes, a pale face, and a quantity of tow-coloured hair. She is named after one of Thackeray's most charming heroines. I scarcely think the novelist would have felt complimented; but the child's near relations were enthusiastic young people, and great readers and admirers of Thackeray and Dickens. The child is sucking her thumb, and watching with great gravity her aunt paint some gleaming fish which are lying upon some green rushes. Presently she falls asleep; a bell rings, and she wakes with a start, to find herself alone in the room—that dreadful person, the lay figure, staring at her, and the plaster casts of heads, hands, and feet dancing in the firelight; the Fiamingo boys really seem alive, and the one she has for a dolly wrapped up in an old piece of silk at her side positively stares at her, for her aunt has painted its eyes. She lifts up her voice and weeps, then the door flies open, and in hurries a young man; she cannot remember what he is like, but she knows that he had the brightest,

merriest blue eyes and fair hair. "All alone! poor little Toddlekins," he says, and he catches her up, Fiamingo boy and all, and bears her off downstairs.

It is dim remembrances such as these, which seem like dreams, that made me, many years afterwards, when I read "The Old Curiosity Shop," recall that room; and if I look at or read that book now, it makes me think of my grandfather's house. It was full of curiosities, for he was a quiet, somewhat melancholy man, given to collecting pictures, china, silver, anything and everything curious. I cannot remember him, but he was tall—5 feet 11 inches—and good-looking.

My grandmother was a Kentish woman, born at Dungeness. She was 5 feet 10 inches, and had hair of Titian red, which in her childhood, she said, "people called 'carrots.'" She was very handsome, cheerful, and active, and would tell us children wonderful stories of her childhood: what fear they lived in at Dover and Dungeness of "Boney's landing;" how they used to sleep for weeks with a few things packed up and placed near the bedside, that they might seize their bundles and fly in a moment. Then she would give the most graphic and heartrending descriptions of the return of the soldiers from Waterloo; how she and her sisters

used to see them sitting and lying wounded and ill along the Dover road ; or she would tell how the "First Gentleman in Europe" came with his brothers, the Dukes of York and Clarence, to her father's house to taste the water supplied to the Fleet, and how once, when her father was entertaining some of the naval officers at dinner, she and her brother and sisters stood on the stairs watching the dishes go in, and getting glimpses of the table. Suddenly they dared her sister Elizabeth to fling the admiral's hat on to the table. It was no sooner said than done ; away it flew as the door opened, and settled upon a dish of cream, and the children could hear the roars of laughter as they crouched under their beds upstairs. Of the festivities and excitement in Dover when the allied sovereigns landed she had much to say ; or she would call forth all your sympathy for some poor man that her mother had rescued from the press-gang.

I can fancy her telling these stories to her two daughters, and to my father and his brothers and sisters, as they sat round the fire in a small room she would call *the parlour* ; and in imagination I can see her and my grandfather smiling and listening to the playing and singing of the young people, or sitting side by side and watching them dance

in the large drawing-room, which was lit by wax candles in heavy silver candlesticks, besides a pair of tall wooden ones taken from a Spanish altar.

These were gala nights; at other times my father sat and read, or did heraldic drawings, in the parlour, while my grandfather smoked and looked at the newspaper, and my grandmother and her daughters did fine needlework. At this time my father was engaged to the elder. My mother has often told me how they scarcely ever saw each other alone, and dared not talk while her father was reading, so they used to write little notes and pass them across the table to each other. Two or three times a year they all went to the theatre or opera, as a great treat. On summer evenings my father took his *fiancée* and her sister for walks through the squares, or up to his brother William's house in St. John's Wood, where they had some musical evenings.

In 1847 he married Miss Rumley, and soon after took a house in Wharton Street, Pentonville. He still worked all day at engraving for my grandfather, but every spare moment was devoted to literature. My mother looked after her house and painted, and to the end of my father's life they were known to their relatives and friends as "the model couple," a title which amused them greatly.

CHAPTER II

My father becomes a contributor to *The Puppet Show*, conducted by Angus Reach and Albert Smith—He teaches in a Ragged School—Is in the van of all such movements as sanitary reform, dwellings for the poor, and free libraries for the people—His courage, coolness, and presence of mind.

IN 1852 my father may be said to have put his foot on the first rung of the literary ladder by contributing to *The Puppet Show*, a magazine conducted by Angus Reach and Albert Smith. In the years between 1848 and 1852 he had not published anything but a few short articles. Being always anxious for the further advancement of the masses, he taught in a Ragged School two or three times a week, helping his friend and schoolfellow, the Rev. Warwick Wroth, who was first curate, and afterwards vicar, of St. Philip's, Granville Square, Clerkenwell. In a short novel, called "Diamonds and Spades," which was published some years afterwards, there is an account of that night-school, which may be interesting to the reader, as it gives a picture of the time. The

scene in the novel is laid in Drury Lane; in reality, it was in some of the slums round Clerkenwell.

The hero of the novel, Leigh Woodroffe, after various misfortunes, comes to London, but fails to get any work, though he tries every method of earning a livelihood. One night, as he is standing full of sad thoughts, leaning against the wall of a miserable court leading out of Drury Lane, he is accosted by a stranger, and, after some preliminary conversation, is asked if he is willing to work. Upon his answering in the affirmative, the stranger leads the way through several courts back into Drury Lane. Proceeding for a short way, he turns into Craven Yard, and stops before a very humble tenement. The door is opened to his knock, and, following his conductor, Leigh Woodroffe finds himself in the midst of a number of little boys, who, in a large whitewashed room, are engaged in learning various lessons. Some are very young and not yet advanced enough to learn much beyond their letters, others are older and more forward.

“‘This,’ said Mordaunt, ‘is my school. It is in this room children gathered from the street are taught obedience, love, and somewhat of religion. I am a poor man my-

self, but my friends help me. You, of course, can read and write; will you assist me in teaching these young ones?’

“Woodroffe nodded his assent, and Mordaunt continued walking familiarly in the midst of the little ones, who smiled proudly when he spoke to them, and who looked, even the roughest of them, up to him with some reverence and affection.

“‘This one,’ said the stranger, singling out a fair-haired little boy, whose quick, intelligent eyes sparkled when Mordaunt placed his hand on his head, ‘this one is the son, the only child, of parents, one of whom is in a madhouse—a pauper lunatic; the other in a prison. To what fate, d’ye think, he would be doomed if some one had not plucked him from destruction? He would have been a thief. Our paternal(?) Government takes no heed of him; no, nor of thousands like him; they are left uncared for, untaught, to recruit a criminal population; left like tares to grow up with the wheat; left till the seeds of vice within them bear fruit and fructify a thousand-fold, and then in steps the Law to punish those whom neither wisdom nor mercy would teach. Oh! shame to any city when she shows such innocents as these—shame especially to England, Christian England, when they are found by thousands in the streets, when openly, and in the knowledge of all, innocents like these suffer a worse slaughter than that of Herod of Judea. Well may Rachel—our English Rachel—weep for her children, slaughtered body and soul as these have been.’

“Woodroffe hung his head as, prophet-like, with his arm stretched, and his long black hair falling in masses on each side of his face, the Christian socialist spake.”

Woodroffe then says he will help Mordaunt in his good work, and he is introduced to the children

as their new master ; then, as it is time to close the school, Mordaunt makes the children kneel, and he says a short prayer. That being concluded, the whole school “stood up and sang, in good time, the following, to the tune of the National Anthem, Mordaunt’s deep voice leading and mingling with the shrill treble of the children’s :

‘ Lord, from Thy blessed throne,
Sorrow look down upon !
God save the poor !
Teach them true liberty,
Make them from tyrants free !
Let their homes happy be :
God save the poor ! ’ ”

There are three verses to this song, but I only quote one. The song is by the Scottish poet, Robert Nicoll. The children, who had no homes, were housed at the school, so that in a small way it was one of the pioneers to the Refuge which was started some years after in Great Queen Street, Holborn, and has now grown to such dimensions that it has its own buildings in Shaftesbury Avenue. It was at this time, also, that my father taught a class of working-men mathematics and the rudiments of Latin at an institution in the City Road. He gives an account of the place in a short article written in 1870 :—

“It is more than twenty years ago since a young man of letters—who, indeed, had not won his spurs, and was rather to be called a boy of letters—strolled into the coffee-room belonging to the Institute, and looked with some interest on its walls. Heaven knows they were bare enough! Heaven knows that the rough working-men he taught were uncouth and rude, that they only thanked him by learning quickly, and that the religious and political bookseller, who had begged him to join the institution, and to work for the benefit of the working-classes, was a humbug; but there was a glamour and an illusion, and the young fellow felt he was improving mankind, and making the world, in his little way, better than he found it. This then was his reward, and as he looked at the whitewashed walls, he felt he was not living quite uselessly.

“The institution is broken up now, and to Latin and mathematics the working-men have unmistakably shown that they prefer the Great Vance’s ‘Walking in the Zoo,’ or ‘Champagne Charley,’ and a host of ridiculous songs. But in those days there was much stir among the people; 1848 was over, but the Charter and the Five Points were still debated. The masses were seething. In France, Lacordaire preached the Gospel, and with it the benefit of the poor. The Abbé Lamennais had made a social tract of some of the words of the Saviour, under the title, we think, of ‘The Gospel of Freedom;’ and before the spectator, upon the whitewashed walls of the institution, hung two remarkable portraits: one was of Eugene Sue, then well known for his socialist novels; the other that of Charles Kingsley, M.A., author of ‘Alton Locke.’

“Eugene Sue was a man of some forty-five years, and unmistakably a Frenchman, although utterly different from the old Frenchman of the *haute noblesse*, and equally so

from the modern production. . . . Charles Kingsley was as thoroughly English as Eugene Sue was French. A high, noble forehead, large, earnest, deep-set eyes (which the lithograph had hollowed as if with thought and work), a firm, close-shut mouth, and powerful jaw; here was a poet as well as a parson, a fighter as well as a writer, a leader as well as a priest: . . . earnest, glowing, true-hearted eyes shone out from beneath the forehead, and seemed to speak openly to whomsoever listened, 'Come, let us work together for the good of mankind.'

"The young fellow turned from the whitewashed wall and solaced himself—not to be above his fustian-coated pupils—with some smoking coffee and coarse bread and butter, for which the 'institooshun,' as it was called by the greasy cad of a religious bookseller who tried to make the thing pay, and to pass off his 'goody' literature at the same time—for which the 'institooshun' pocketed a sum that would have afforded good viands. But the method of the majority of those who wanted to help the working-man in those days was to get a good round sum out of him. Hence the institution fell to the Great Vance, to comic singers, and such obscene birds of prey, who served out the working-man as the Harpies did the flesh of the Pater Æneas."

At the time the portraits hung there the institution did not pay. The typical working-man, who wants to learn Latin and mathematics, soon rose to be more than a working-man, and the loafer always remained a loafer, and always will. The young author, who gave his hard-earned leisure to teaching them, soon found this out, and was

obliged to acknowledge to himself "that the typical working-man, like all good and great men, is somewhat of a rare bird," and also that—"as he (the author) grows towards fogeydom—that the young men of the day would rather play croquet with the girl of the period, or even dress in 'drag,' play at an amateur theatre, burn statues in a college quadrangle, or listen to the Christy Minstrels, than teach the typical working-man."

In 1850, when "Alton Locke" appeared, men were wild with Chartism, and Thomas Cooper, a man of immense influence, author of the "Purgatory of Suicides," a very remarkable poem, was preaching openly Straussism to the workmen. Cooper was branded as a Chartist, and was imprisoned for two years for defending the rights of the poor; but he fought nobly, like a great-hearted man as he was, with his political troubles and his religious doubts, and for many years before his death he believed in Christianity. With the same love for humanity that he always had, he atoned for past errors of faith by continually preaching in aid of the truth in the very hall in the City Road where he had taught infidelity.

He often wrote to my father, and though I can find none of his early letters, I quote in a later

chapter a characteristic one, written in 1878, when he was, though quite an old man, still a Christian lecturer, as he had been for many years.

National education, but with religious teaching, was one of many things my father advocated and strove to bring about, also sanitary dwellings for the poor, recreation grounds, and free libraries. The following letter, written about this time, shows how much he had this last scheme at heart :—

“Your paper of Wednesday contains a leading article which has given great satisfaction to many. I allude to that on the paucity of public exhibitions and methods by which the poor man can employ his spare time and improve himself. *But I fear a very long time will elapse before we get a reform.* In alluding to the library of the British Museum, what you say is very true. I am almost afraid that this cannot be remedied. I was in the library on Monday, and the place was entirely full of students, all busily employed in taking notes; many of the occupants were ladies. I fear a larger space could not well be devoted to the purpose, but a better and an immediate remedy lies in our hands, and that is—let some few individuals raise a subscription sufficient to take a house in some public thoroughfare; let the rooms be furnished with seats and tables, and then let others subscribe books, or money to buy books, and let the public be admitted to read them. I am a poor man, but out of three hundred volumes of, I hope, well-selected books, I would volunteer twenty for the purpose. More than this, should you, by printing this letter, give authority to this plan, I will busy myself in

soliciting clergymen and others able to assist us ; and when we have grown of sufficient importance we could have a hall built, like St. Martin's, and solicit the Government to grant us some of the thousands of duplicates which are at present useless in the British Museum. By this means the poisonous cheap literature widely disseminated would be either crushed or purified ; the working-man would be able to seek for himself ; the rabid lecturers, propagandists, &c., would be refuted by their hearers."

The neighbourhood round Clerkenwell and Bagnigge Wells Road was not very charming even in those days, though it was more rural than now. My father, in his philanthropic labours, used to frequent some very low courts and alleys, and his courage and coolness often stood him in good stead. One evening, as he was going down Saffron Hill, a very low neighbourhood, a policeman called upon him to assist him in the capture of a man who was "wanted," and who had hidden himself in a house down a court, where the inhabitants were in a state of revolt against the law entering in person. My father followed the policeman into the court. They were hooted and yelled at, and pelted with cabbage stumps and brick-bats. Hot water was thrown over them from the houses, but they stood their ground, and my father addressed the people, and so worked upon their feelings that they not only

left off insulting them, but the man came down and gave himself up. Another time, many years later, I was myself a witness of his power over a large crowd. It was the evening of the day of thanksgiving for the recovery of the Prince of Wales. My father had somewhat rashly (considering his then delicate state of health) promised to take five young people to see the illuminations. We were to walk two and two, he leading the way with a friend of mine, a girl of thirteen or fourteen. We managed very well till we reached the triumphal arch at the bottom of Ludgate Hill. We were going towards St. Paul's, and were under the middle of the arch at just half-past nine o'clock. The crush was so great at this time that it was spoken of in the newspapers, and wonder was expressed that no one was killed there; this was due to my father's presence of mind. I shall never forget the sensation of suffocation and pressure. I was lifted off my feet, but I grasped the arm of the young man I was with, though I could scarcely see him, as he was rather short. The women's screams were appalling, and I remember thinking not at all to be mistaken (as one sometimes reads in cases of murder) for screams of fun. One woman had her head pressed against my waist,

and I could see right into her mouth as she cried, "Oh! I shall die, I shall die!" I said, with the brutal coolness of a very young person, "Then don't make such a fuss about it," and it quieted her. At that moment my father turned his head, and I saw his face. I was frightened, horribly frightened, not because of the crowd — I was perhaps scarcely old enough to recognise our danger—but with the fear that he should suffer, that hemorrhage from the lungs should come on, for I knew by the pallor of his face, and the two bright red spots on his cheeks, that he was intensely excited, and excitement was very bad for him. So I cried out to my friend, "Oh! Frances, Frances! take care of him!" She answered immediately, "I will; *no one* shall hurt him." My father heard me, and said, "Courage, Lollie, don't be frightened; *I* am all right." We swayed backwards and forwards, the pressure grew greater, then his voice rang out, "Women, stop screaming!" He waited; there was dead silence. "Now," he said, "do as I tell you: you in front stand firm, resist with all your might; you behind go gently back—mind, very gently—when I give the word." There was a stoppage of the swaying movement. Then my father said, "*Now! gently*

back." And we went back, and were in a few moments in the whirling crowd outside. The last I saw of him in that crowd, he was clinging to a lamp-post, and my friend, Frances, was holding his arm with one hand, while she beat a working-man on the chest with the other, saying, "Oh! you wicked man, you wretch to push me so." She was quite unconscious of what she was doing; her eyes were brilliant, her hair blowing round her. The man looked at her, and said with a smile, "Lord love you, Miss, I wouldn't hurt a 'air of your 'ead!" At that moment my hand was torn from my father's coat, and I and my escort were hurried along. When we at last came to a stand we found ourselves opposite Ludgate Hill Station. Mr. Phillips wanted to return, but I would not hear of it; the whirling crowd frightened me.

"Take me home! take me home!" I said. "Let us go over Waterloo Bridge." The young man looked as if he thought me mad. "This leads to Blackfriars," he replied. "Then take me to Blackfriars," I cried, trying to hurry him on; but he dragged me across the road, through the crowd into the station. "We'll take a train and get home through the slums," he said.

The station was comparatively empty. We had

half-an-hour to wait, and it soon began to get crowded, but I sat on a seat and quietly cried, nor would I let Mr. Phillips stir from my side. When he discovered I was crying he began to remonstrate with me, and at last he said, "Why, I always thought you such a strong-minded girl!" I replied in gasps, "Oh!—I—know—but—I'm not; only—*don't tell.*" He promised he would not, but he never forgot to chaff me about it.

In the meantime my father had missed us; so, putting the two girls into a safe place, and leaving my brother to take care of them, he looked about for me; but it was useless, and he soon returned to them, and they walked until they were fortunate enough to find a cab. They hoped we should have arrived before them, and were very uneasy when half-an-hour passed and we did not come. When we did arrive we found a very silent party. My father had not mentioned the escape we had had, but was trying to make the best of things, not to alarm my mother, in which Miss Ballantyne and my brother seconded him; but Frances looked tragic, she feared we were crushed, and she would neither move nor speak; my mother knew from her face something was the matter.

A few days after a gentleman called. He was to

have gone with us to see the illuminations, and he came to explain that as he was coming from his chambers in the Temple, and about to cross Fleet Street, he saw the corpses of three women carried past; they had been crushed under Temple Bar. I am sure many would have shared the same fate under the triumphal arch had it not been for my father's presence of mind.

CHAPTER III

Mundus Dramaticus ("The New Rosciad"): A Satire—My father's first book, "Houses with their Fronts Off"—A Dedication—A letter from Thackeray—Robert Brough on War Songs—"The Young Couple"—Letter from Godfrey Turner.

My father was fond of employing satire, as those who know his writings are well aware, and he helped to start in 1851 a magazine, entitled *The Play-Goer: An Illustrated Magazine of Dramatic Literature and Criticism*. The *Mirror of the Times* says:—

"We are much pleased with a *feuilleton* sent us, entitled *The Play-Goer*. It possesses sound views of things, and is written with vigour and spirit. Its object is to reform the stage as well as to amuse, and we cordially wish it success. We agree with a great many of its criticisms. We think, however, it is too severe on honest Paul Bedford and Jack-pudding Wright; it is not the fault of these actors if they stoop to buffoonery. It is the demand of a London audience, and writers and authors of gross burlesque are much more to blame than the poor mimic who interprets them. It is the duty of authors to correct and lead the public taste. In place of this they endeavour to rival each other in the production of eccentric folly and low absurdity.

“The writer of ‘The New Rosciad’ in *The Play-Goer* shows considerable power, sense, and appreciation. The following couplet is happy:—

‘Learn from this most infallible of rules—
The taste of fashion is the law of fools.’”

The writer of “The New Rosciad” was my father. Founded on Churchill’s celebrated poem, it dealt out (with all a young man’s scorn) criticisms on the actors of the day. The dramatists of the past assembled in dread array to sit in judgment on the various aspirants to the dramatic throne, vacant by the retirement of Macready. Edwin Forrest is the first to come before the ghostly jury. He is introduced as follows:—

“As the rough sea, when angry billows roar,
Casts sand and dirt and seaweed to the shore;
As Chartists with at least an honest cause,
Put forth the worst men to reform the laws;
As each thing bad usurps the place of best,
Whilst modest merit lags behind the rest;
So Edwin Forrest with a brazen air
Gave forth his claim unto the vacant chair.”

There is one point essential to the success of satire, namely, the entire absence of personal spleen; when it comes from a clear head, clever pen, and cool temper, it is a great power. “These qualities,” says a critic of the time, “are fully

possessed by the little pamphlet before us. The author has power. In his concluding appeal to the critics there is much force and truth." Here is the quotation :—

“To you we turn, ye critics of the day,
Who notice, but not criticise a play;
With whom a list of commonplaces stand
A fair critique, all cut and dried to hand;
Who mention carefully each fat buffoon,
Each Romeo’s shoe-tie, or new scenic moon;
Who fall to raptures at a novel *pas*,
And slur all characters to praise the star;
Who feel, or, perhaps, express not one high aim,
And rank a farce and tragedy the same;
Regard the author as a mere pretence
For Mathew’s padding, or Kean’s art of fence;
In three long columns sound an opera’s praise,
And make five lines reward the best of plays.
Bestir yourselves : be not the ready tools—
Th’ effeminate voice of fashion-loving fools.
Lead ye the people, and their taste direct;
‘Dare to have sense yourselves’ and intellect;
And, striving for an elder sister’s cause,
Merit your country’s and your own applause.
Raise the great teacher to the chair once more,
And make the drama flourish as of yore !”

Here ends the record of an attempt at dramatic satire, which, at least, is interesting after the lapse of nearly fifty years.

In 1853 he was busy with *The Biographical*
C

Magazine, which he edited for a short time, but decided to abandon for reasons which must have had great weight with him, since it was not in his nature to be easily turned aside from a work once undertaken. In the same year he was writing a weekly letter for *The Canadian Free Press*, and a series of articles for *Diogenes*, a magazine started somewhat on the lines of *Punch*.

He was also writing some stories for George Cruikshank, whose acquaintance he had made about this time; their friendship only ending with the death of the great caricaturist. Amongst other literary friends he could now count Frank Smedley, the well-known author of several charming books.

In 1854, at the request of Mr. John Cassell, of Ludgate Hill, founder of the world-renowned firm of Cassell, Petter, & Galpin, my father undertook a short compilation from Russian history. The book was entitled, "The Russian Empire: its History and Present Condition of its People." This was his first book, and, it is needless to say, was written when all the world was seeking information about Russia.

The *fin-de-siècle*, after the event, would no doubt scoff at the effort of a young man unacquainted

with the Russian language, and taking his information from others perhaps no better informed than himself. But the school of Freeman had not then arisen, not even that of Froude, and it has been left for another quarter of a century to pass, before the school of the minutely particular has driven from the field the compiler, who would seek to fill the void felt by his countrymen in the knowledge of the mighty nation, with whom they were then at war, from sources which, like the work of Custine, were the best to be had for the purpose. But even the stories which Custine and other authorities related seemed to my father so incredible, that he was at some trouble to verify them by having recourse to living travellers, and here, unfortunately for the Russians, the *vivâ voce* reports of the author's friends were considerably worse than those which appeared in print.

In this year he also published a collection of stories called, "Houses with their Fronts Off." The publisher was James Blackwood, of Paternoster Row. The book was illustrated by William M'Connell, an artist whose sketches may be seen in the early numbers of *Punch* and other periodicals, and who died young. "Houses with

their Fronts Off" was very successful, 10,000 copies soon being sold. It was dedicated to Thackeray. The dedication was in the form of a letter, and is so true and charming a testimony to that great man's genius, that I make no apology for quoting it:—

"It is perhaps longer ago than one can afford to look back with pleasure, since I, then in my teens, gave a decided testimony of my taste, by falling violently in love with 'The Yellow Plush Papers,' in *Fraser's Magazine*, written by one Michael Angelo Titmarsh. I was fresh from Fielding, and quite well up in the Thwackum and Square case. I had, as far as I could understand, an extreme appreciation of Swift, and a perfect knowledge of Smollett and Richardson; and to these classics, but more especially to the first, I thought, and I now know, that I had found a worthy successor. I need not say that I followed up the author, whether it was in a 'Grumble about Christmas Books,' 'Romance upon Romance,' or in that most manly and touching defence of the province of the writer, the paper upon Laman Blanchard.

"I was rejoiced upon being able to continue my studies by transferring my attentions from 'Yellow Plush' to the yellow covers of 'Vanity Fair;' and did I here set forth the love I had for that book—(and surely the passion we have for a work of art should be dignified by that name)—the number of people I persuaded to read it, how I talked about it and swore by it, your publisher would be in gratitude bound to make me a handsome present on the score of advertisement; but I refrain from doing so. Of course I dissented, as I do now, from those people who *would*

see nothing more than satire and ill-nature ; I saw nothing, nor do I now, but a great and gentle love for all mankind, and a wish to reprove their follies and their vices. I saw a parallel between the great Dean of St. Patrick's and yourself, when he, in his letter to Sir Charles Wogan, declares that although the conjecture that he has 'dealt in satire, both in prose and in verse, has been an absolute bar to his rising in the world, yet that very world must suppose that he followed what he thought to be his talent, and that charitable people will suppose that he had a design to laugh the follies of mankind out of countenance, *and as often to lash the vices out of practice.*' That was, and is, my idea ; and the accusation of bitterness and ill-nature I never accepted. I was not unaware that the point of satire is its truth, nor am I, I presume, less hit by your shafts than others ; but I thanked the blows for the lesson they taught, and the good they did me.

"With such feelings, it seemed to me to be a duty that I should lay some little testimony of my gratitude and regard at your feet ; and as the fashion of dedicating works to great lords, so indulged in by glorious John Dryden, who gifted his patrons, in magniloquent language, with 'all' the virtues under Heaven, is extinct, pray allow me to have the pleasure of offering mine to a man who, I am sure, possesses a very great many of them."

Mr. Thackeray in reply sent the following letter :—

"36 ONSLOW SQUARE, BROMPTON, Dec. 2.

"I am but just returned to town, and thank you for your little volume, which I found on my table last night. If you saw the heap of letters demanding answers which lie beside

your kind one, you would see my reply to you must perforce be very short—I never know what to say about compliments addressed to myself. . . . I cannot pretend to judge of ‘Houses with their Fronts Off.’ I looked at some of them last night, and was very much amused with the people I saw, and the kind-hearted observer who showed me the inhabitants—I instance particularly ‘The Theatre,’ ‘The Workhouse,’ and ‘The Young Married Couple.’ Dr. Tufto and his boys remind me of a certain Dr. B-rch and some scholastic combats and recollections which I have read in the works of another author. I dare say you are no more aware of the resemblance than I was, years ago, that I emulated Fielding; but on looking back lately at those early papers, I saw whose the original manner was. What we see ourselves is the best worth telling, after all. ‘The Workhouse’ is a good paper, containing pathos, kindness, and matter (for the reader’s subsequent observation). I must not go on lecturing you, however, but meet my other creditors—and content myself by assuring you that I am, your obliged and faithful servant,

“W. M. THACKERAY.”

My father replied to this letter as follows :—

“14 WHARTON STREET, Dec. 18, 1854.

“I can assure you that no letter ever gave me more pleasure than your very kind one on the subject of the ‘Houses,’ which I find here on my return. I should not trouble you with a reply save that in speaking of the ‘Workhouse,’ with a backward glance at Dr. Tufto, you say, ‘After all, what we *see for ourselves* is best worth telling,’ possibly presuming that ‘Swishtale Academy’ is but a reflex from your excellent little work. I can assure

you that your former generous supposition that I was unaware of the imitation is the most true, and that Dr. Tufto and his boys are copies of Dr. Pain and my schoolfellows of 'Aspley, Beds,' as our school letters were directed—so much so indeed, that several of my schoolfellows not only recognise each room and the school, but also the boys, whose names are but little altered.

"I dare say this elaborate vindication is unnecessary, but I would seek to stand well in your memory, and one or two papers have accused me of imitating 'Dickens, Thackeray, and Jerrold.' To the last gentleman I plead 'Not guilty;' to the two first of the accused I would—I suppose I *must*—own, since everybody says so, to having used the same brushes and colours. But surely people sometimes think alike. Thus, I have a book in my secretaire half done, and begun some two months ago, called 'Twelfth Night Characters,' and a certain Mr. Titmarsh has prevented its being used by writing a most delightful, kindly, and well-purposed book for us children, called the 'Rose and the Ring,' and there in the preface calling his book a set of Twelfth Night Characters. Who will believe, if my book should come out, but that I took my ideas from Mr. Titmarsh? I instance this amongst others. I presume most of us have hit upon the same ideas, good or bad. You must excuse this long letter; it is the last I shall trouble you with for some time. I must go and win my spurs, and if I should ever chance to do so, one of my greatest pleasures will be meeting with one who has fought and won himself, and has counselled and written to me so kindly."

"Houses with their Fronts Off" was so well received, that in the same year it was followed

by a similar work, called "Twelve Inside and One Out." The cover showed the inside of an omnibus, which was designed by my father, and drawn by William M'Connell.

This book was as successful as its predecessor, of which the review says, for "oddity, liveliness of fancy, exquisite pathos, and no inconsiderable amount of true humour, these sketches are unequalled." I think it is a pity my father did not write more fiction; he was very fond of it, and said it was easier and more interesting than essays. I have often heard him spoken of as a master of short stories.

About this time he edited and published a small volume, entitled "Songs of the War by the Best Writers." Some were his own; they had come out from time to time in a journal called *The Patriot*. I quote here a characteristic letter from Robert Brough:—

"You didn't send me the paper, though you said you did. However, I have seen it, and like it very well, with a few insignificant exceptions. It ought to do, and I am sure will, if the proprietor be a man of patience and a little something else.

"I will do what you wish with pleasure, 'as well as I know how if not a little better,' as the Yankees say—if it will be in time on Thursday, as I shall not be able

to do anything till then. If that would be too late, stop me in time, and let me know when I shall be in time for next number.

“Your verses in first number (I have not seen second) are very good—barring the subject. *I don't like war songs*—not taking the Bright side of the question, but because I don't see how any variety is to be got out of it. One battle is exactly like another, and a song about it can only be a list of killed and wounded done into verse. Look at the people who have ever tried it—you find they can only say the same thing over and over again—Cæsar, Nelson, Bonaparte, Wellington, Old Charley, Alexander the Great, Snooks, Heliogabalus, &c. &c., they all appear the same matchless individuals gifted with precisely the same attributes. If you could get a translation of the war songs of the Sandwich Islanders for the last 200 years, we should find ‘The Death of Nelson,’ ‘The Battle of the Nile,’ ‘The British Grenadiers,’ ‘The Saucy Arethusas,’ and the devil knows what, word for word, with only the proper names changed. If you could find a revolutionary war of people fighting for liberty, that would be worth writing about, as involving a higher question than cutting throats and supporting kings, queens, and emperors. *This war does it*, and the people who fall in it are only to be deplored as having been sacrificed to the old original swindle with its face painted in new colours.

“There's copy for you if you like.”

Brough has neither dated nor put an address to his letter, so I cannot say when it was written, but think it must have been in 1854, as I find a note in my father's diary of that date saying that

the first number of the *Patriotic Fund Journal* was started, and that is no doubt the paper spoken of.

Of 1855 he says in his diary :—

“The year begins for me unprosperously. The war has destroyed trade. Eglinton’s paper is not yet come out, my attempts to sell Cassell’s paper are unsuccessful, and on account of the war four books are refused. There are other disappointing circumstances. Nevertheless, I hope to do more during the year and to be a better man.”

“The disappointing circumstances” refer no doubt to a melodrama which was sent to, and accepted by Wallack, the well-known actor; it was called “The Catacombs,” and was returned by Wallack in consequence of the Marylebone “being closed for an indefinite period.” Then Charles Kean accepted it and lost it, and as my father had kept no copy, it was never more heard of. Then a paper called *The British Lion* was coming out. In the following letter, sent me by Mr. Dillon Croker, my father refers to it :—

“I find, for the first time, that my article on ‘Heraldry : Civilised Tattooing’ was lifted out entirely in *The Morning Post*, and nearly so in the *Herald*, besides which *The Daily Telegraph* spoke highly of it. I am accepted on *Chambers*, and a long article on Thackeray will appear this or next

week, besides which I have been for *The Illustrated Times* down to the Reformatory Institution for Young Thieves at Redhill, on the military principle. *Reformatories are making a great stir now.* I am doing a similar, yet wholly different, article for the *Home Companion*. Let me know if you do not want it, and I will send it elsewhere. My Christmas story has been well spoken of. I see you are about to do a London story. I hope it will be successful. I will try and give it a lift. We have a meeting of shareholders of *The British Lion*. The editor of *The Field* and one or two other *littérateurs* come in as sharers. I will let you know if it turns out anything, for you to be with us: I think it will be a good thing. We have already a printer."

Everything was ready, and, as my father said, "*The British Lion* is now in black and white, and he hoped it would soon be read;" but some hitch occurred amongst the shareholders, and the paper never saw the light.

In the same year a Mr. George Verey called upon him and stated that he was desirous of starting a magazine, and asked my father to help him by writing for it. As a beginner in literature, my father was charmed at the idea of editing a magazine, and so *Verey's Register* was started, but it did not last many months. In it appeared "Diamonds and Spades," a short novel of about the length of "Called Back." The story deals with some of the topics of the day, and in it my father again utilised

the scenes he had witnessed in the reformatory for young thieves, and he also visited several prisons, that the scenes he described might be drawn from actual experience. The story was afterwards published in one volume by Henry Lea, of Warwick Lane, Paternoster Row. *The Leader* says: "For wit, quaintness, and pathos, Mr. Friswell's book deserves high recognition."

He was now writing for *The Illustrated Magazine*, and in it appeared the first of his Window Sketches, which were years afterwards collected and printed as "Other People's Windows." He also published "The Young Couple," of which Godfrey Turner, at that time and for many subsequent years one of the leader-writers on *The Daily Telegraph*, speaks of in a letter to my father as follows:—

"Most certainly 'The Young Couple' is a tale of the highest order of merit. I tell you candidly that I have read nothing of yours, not even the best parts of the 'Sham Pamphlets,' that I so thoroughly like. It is scarcely fair yet to speak unreservedly of 'The Pamphlets,' but I am doubtful whether I shall have to tell you when they are finished that I think their intention as good as that of 'The Young Couple,' while I am nearly sure I shall not be able to pronounce them equal in effect.

"I have placed the story *first* in our book. Now pray lose no time in letting me have the rest of your quota. I

want to make up the whole of the matter directly ; can't you make up a bundle of cuttings and MS. and let me have them by Wednesday ?—Yours always.

“*P.S.*—I have read further into ‘The Young Couple’ since writing the foregoing. I have altered my opinion of it. Instead of thinking it a tale of the highest order, I think it a tale greatly above any order of story-writing of the present day—bolder, purer far than those works of Dickens and Thackeray in which I, at least, can detect the reticence of success.”

“The Young Couple” is so short, it can scarcely be called a novel. It is in character more like the stories of the present day, inasmuch as it is the account of a married couple, as its name implies. Both Smollett and Fielding let us have a glimpse of the after-life of some of their characters ; the former tells us how happy his hero was when the lovely Narcissa presented him with a “fine boy ;” but most of the old-fashioned novels ended with the marriage of the hero and heroine, and we suppose they lived happily ever after. But did they ? Think of that charming Ruth Pinch, everybody’s favourite ; how pleasant it would have been if Dickens had let us see her again as Mrs. Westlock. Thackeray is much kinder ; he lets us renew our acquaintance with several of his characters, notably with Mr. and Mrs. Pendennis, who are a model

couple, and live in great felicity ; and I certainly think it adds to the charm of his books to meet our old friends again.

My father in his introduction to "The Young Couple" says he thinks

"more of married life than that it should be but the conclusion of three volumes published by Mr. Bentley, or Mr. Chapman, or any other publisher. If there is a great deal of tumultuous joy in rushing into it (marriage), there is also a great deal of quiet peace in its course, and in this home-loving land this ought to be illustrated."

Time changes most things. If my father lived now, he could read plenty of novels dealing with married life ; but they would not illustrate peace and love, but the war between the sexes.

"The Young Couple" deals with the *happiness* of married life, and its purpose is to encourage love matches and early marriages. The author is very severe upon the fashionable father and mother who sell their daughters, and even more severe on the selfish bachelor.

"Why don't they marry ? Why for them are kept that ghastly army of bad Amazons who pace our streets at night ? I speak out ; indeed I must ; people know these things as well as I do, and now is the time to improve them. Just because they prefer silly station in society, elegant listlessness, a life of idleness and vice—for idleness is vice—to a

noble struggle with the world, aided by a wife. We see plenty of these young men at parties, plenty standing by the walls, or sitting upon the rout seats. We know them by dozens in clubs, and meet them everywhere. 'I can't marry, my boy,' drawls Tapley, 'because I can't find a woman with twelve hundred a year who will have me.' What the deuce should a woman see in Tapley to bestow twelve hundred a year upon him? He did not mean it at first, but he does *now*. He has talked over this so long with his friends—he has said it so often, that he believes it—he believes it all. Other young men talk like him. What are they? A set of lotus-eaters; they have left the gods of truth and honesty, and are dreamy liars-in-wait upon Fortune. They seek place and honour as Cerberus might seek a sop; they are *dilettanti* patriots, gentlemanly men, whose place and family have spoilt them, who are ruined by a competence. Their fortunes are, perhaps, like the goose was to the glutton—too much for one, and not enough for two. They must find a lady with 'an equivalent,' or they marry not; they will never wed till they find 'a good match.'

"Oh, young men of England! is such your ambition? Are you grown so dastardly as that you must be *kept*?"

This, I think every one will agree, is strong writing, but not stronger than necessary; for in 1862, when a new edition of the story came out, he speaks in his preface of the signs of the times, and says that when *The Times* newspaper finds it

"worth while to insert a protest against the concubinage of the day, and to devote a column to the worldly disadvantage

of indulging in the society of 'pretty Horse-Breakers,' it is certainly time for any one who has the good of the community at heart to do what he can to remedy the evil. Our churchmen should take the hint, and not leave the field to week-day preachers. In the meantime, alas! 'scrofulous French novels,' as Mr. Browning terms them, operas and plays founded upon them, and paintings of the Lais of the day on the walls of our Academy, with photographs of the Nell Gwynnes and Mary Kings in all the West End print-shops, must work some evil.

"England was once celebrated for its happy marriages, but nowadays 'fast' pseudo-comic writers, rich, stupid, and vicious young men, and lazy young women, who prefer to be a rich man's mistress to a poor man's wife, are doing all they can to make the 'institution' of marriage a forgotten one."

These words, written so long ago, seem almost prophetic.

CHAPTER IV

A missing chapter from "The Newcomes"—"In the Abyss"—
Death of William Friswell, senior—The Urban Club.

"THERE was once a time," says Thackeray in 'The Newcomes,' "when the sun used to shine more brightly than it appears to do in this latter half of the nineteenth century, when the zest of life was keener, when the perusal of novels was productive of immense delight, and the monthly advent of magazine day was hailed as an exciting holiday; when to know Thompson, who had written a magazine article, was an honour and a privilege."

We do not feel like this now; there are too many novels, too many magazines (all alike too), and too many Thompsons writing; the "privilege," it seems, would now be to know the person who did not write. But Thackeray was speaking of the days of his youth, and yet it seems to me this passage would equally apply to the time when he was writing it. I do not quite know the year "The Newcomes" first appeared, but if it was published as he wrote it, which is most likely, it must have been in 1853 or 1854, for the last words were written in Paris in June 1855.

In these days, literature and all things are so evanescent, and people have so little time, and think so much of being "up to date," that they have little or no inclination to read the books of forty years ago, and "The Newcomes" may possibly be only a name to some modern men and women ; if it be so, they have missed one of the finest novels in the language. My father says : "English literature cannot produce anything more sublimely pathetic" than the death of Colonel Newcome, with which the book ends.

About forty-six years ago, the day that the monthly instalments of this novel came out was "hailed as an exciting holiday," and though it ran for twenty-three months, it was not a day too long for the enthusiastic young people who read it. Should we keep up our interest in a story for nearly two years, and could any one feel excited over magazine day now ? It seems that many were of opinion that the story ended too soon ; that it ought to have run, if not a number, certainly a chapter longer. My father was of this opinion, and supplied the missing chapter. It came out in *Sharpe's Magazine*. He says in his introduction :—

"It is a dreadfully bold step which I am about to take. Cimabue has finished his picture, and the boy Giotto seizes

the pencil with a reckless hand, and offers to put a few touches—just a few—(audacious wretch!) to the virgin. But then what help is there for it? It is with me a case of conscience. Here for three-and-twenty months has the hand of the mighty master held us spell-bound in such a mixture of wonder, pity, and delight; such an April passion of gentle smiles and tears; such a tremor of indignation or soft gush of love at or for Ethel Newcome,—and now, at the moment when he has so nobly rescued his heroine, when he has made our hearts spring forth again with an after-crop of affection, so strong, so fresh, and so enduring that it will last the winter of our lives, we are to be disappointed in hearing how it was done.”

So, in compassion for the many people who wished to share in the joys of Clive and Ethel, and as a matter of conscience, he adds a chapter; and if this is not excuse enough, he has the example of the novelist himself, who in “Romance upon Romance” took the same liberty with Sir Walter Scott’s “Ivanhoe,” and continued the history of Rowena.

As Mr. Thackeray in his letter accuses my father of imitating him, and as almost all the reviewers of my father’s works, much to his annoyance, said he took Thackeray for his model, we may presume that in the missing chapter he tried to imitate the style, though it by no means follows, and he does not say he did so, but the

critics of that time thought so, and spoke well of it, and those of my readers who know the novel can judge for themselves.

The book is supposed to be edited by Mr. Arthur Pendennis, to those who know their Thackeray a well-known character, but after the death of the Colonel, Thackeray seems so pleased with his power, as well he may be, that he forgets his editor; quite pushes him aside, and comes himself before the public to claim the reward of his labours. And he tells us that "Pendennis and Laura, Ethel and Clive, fade away into Fableland." One would gather that he thinks himself that the novel ends abruptly, for he says:—

"We have parted with them on a sudden, and without so much as a shake of the hand. Is yonder line (——),¹ which I drew with my own pen, a barrier between me and Hades, as it were, across which I can see those figures retreating and only dimly glimmering? Before taking leave of Mr. Arthur Pendennis, might he not have told us whether Miss Ethel married anybody finally? It is provoking that he should retire to the shades without answering that sentimental question."

So Thackeray's readers thought, and my father, in his preface to the missing chapter, says he

¹ Drawn at the end of the paragraph which ends with the Colonel's death.

knows at least a "dozen gentle hearts who were looking forward to an" intellectual and heartfelt joy, and who will be disappointed.

"Two, to whom I read the last number, the other night, were so wrapped in admiration and in pity for the Colonel, that they forgave Thackeray everything; but in the morning they were in full cry—as indeed, in another sense, they had been overnight—about the injustice of the thing, that we should share the *reality* of Clive's and Ethel's sorrows, and have their joys only hinted at in Fableland. Fableland forsooth! let me tell the author that I possess, with others of my countrymen, and all who speak the English tongue, some thousands of acres of that dreamland, held by a kind of feudal tenure, from Shakespeare, Jonson, Swift, Scott, Thackeray, and Dickens, and other kaisers of that empire, and that I would not part with them for the same quantity in *bonâ fide* acres in broad England itself. But we don't want to be cheated with a kind of apologue about Fableland, and so, to please one of these young people, I, on the sly, commenced this missing chapter. Will the public pardon me as she did? Will the great author of 'The Newcomes' himself do so?"

THE NEWCOMES.

IN WHICH CLIVE AND ETHEL PERFORM A DUTY THEY OWE TO
THEMSELVES, AND TO SOCIETY.

"If, in a work which is essentially as mortal as any written in this latter age, and which is so finite in itself, an author, who writes for amusement, were permitted to speak of Infinity, he might well do so upon the subject of death;

for when once that mighty conqueror steps into a house, he bears upon his shadowy wings a waft of eternity. He was here but yesterday, but how long ago it seems. Our little boy lived and spoke, gambolled, frolicked, and put on a thousand little winning ways but a short year ago, and now he lies in his little clay bed, with the grass springing over him, and the clouds drifting day and night above his tomb, and it seems an eternity since we saw and kissed him. What would we not give to touch that soft elastic cheek, to look into that brilliant, restless, innocent young eye again? but no, he is out of sight, and has touched the goal whither we are hastening, and until we reach it, we shall not see him more.

"Our mother too, but a few short years. One's memory is retentive; one can fancy the soft hand as it smoothed the hair from the forehead; the kind human look of mother's love from eyes that had known sorrow, and had learnt patience and womanly endurance; ah, when will hand so press us, when will eyes look into ours so again: not till there comes a time when others shall think of us as we think of *them*, and mark and ponder over the love which they think but lightly of, or put hastily aside, now.

"So it was with Clive. Rosa was dead. The little human soul had passed out of its frivolous cage, and had gone wandering elsewhere. And as Clive sat of long dark evenings in his studio, or marched to the glass to look at an expression taken from his own sad face, which he wished to depict, and therein marked the lines of thought and care, or the few silver hairs amongst his flowing and yet sunny locks, he thought that he had grown suddenly old, and the past came back and stood behind him like black care behind the charioteer and called up memories of his wife.

"Well, she was gone. Clive sighed, but yet felt an irrepressible content, and at the same time a reproach, bitter, crushing, and overwhelming, which did honour to his honest heart. Had he, the same unseen questioner, which in our time, my brother, hath been to you and to me, asked him, had he done all he could to win that young heart which had been moulded into so frivolous a willingness to love anything given to her? Had he tried might and main, by kindness, winning way, and delicate attention, to retain that bend which the pliable little heart once had toward him? Truly she had not understood him. She was too weak, too frivolous for this strong love! so he thought once; had not this preconceived opinion made her so?

"The shadows of the evening began to fall more deeply in the studio, but the north light still rested on his canvas, and his brush worked away at the sombre flesh tints of a Baptist's head which he was painting. The gaunt dead face itself looked almost reproachfully at its creator; it was for this mistress that he had sacrificed one fair portion of his wife's heart. She had not understood him! Had he understood her? Again memory came to him, and the little gay figure of Rosa, in her days of prosperity, came in, all lace, smiles, and perfumery; all rosy loveliness and piquant coquetry, and stood by his easel—a different one and different studio from this—and tried in her awkward, pretty way, to talk to him about his art. He recollected, with a keen pang now, the lordly disdain and the jealous swelling of his heart with which he received her, and put aside her praises: how he had heard his father's kind full voice hinting that she should go to him: how silently, but yet how deeply, he had resented this: how he expected every devotion from his wife, and yet had given her so little

warmth himself: he had taken her in a royal disdain, almost to wound another; if to gratify his father, yet with an idea that the blow should glance and strike another. The marriage was not a holy one. The blow had glanced; had stricken all; none deeper than himself.

"The brush fell from his fingers, and his right hand pressed his eyes; his left still held his palette, and his mahl-stick resting upon his knee. The strong young heart, strong though acutely feeling every blow, and it had many, heaved and seemed to expand with a kind of painful joy, as returned its seldom-absent guest—the form of Ethel.

"Yes, it had been for her, through her, that he had paid this lip devotion to his dead wife. She had been with him ever; with him at the altar; with him through the weary weeks of riches; with him through the drearier struggles for life; with him through the torture he had endured throughout. He had been false to the love he bore her, and she was revenged. And all this brooding sadness; all this anger and irritation of soul, his dead wife had seen through, as women can and will. Poor Rosa! poor dead Rosa! The face which he had marked upon the night of that dreadful final quarrel came again to him, revealing to him the anguish of years.

"So Clive sat, the hand pressed still more closely over his eyes, and the tears trickling through the thin fingers; the brave young heart gave way at last—not for himself, but for another.

"It was in this position—so wrapped in his own meditations that he noticed no one's advent or departure—that a certain kindly young person, whose chief business both in life and in this history has been to make others happy, found him. She had brought little Tommy, who had been spending some days in a home which, thank

Providence, was less lonely than his own, back to his father. She had been busied in seeing him safely in bed, and in arranging matters with that kindly nurse who had watched the dear Colonel's last moments, and who since had been installed as Clive's housekeeper; she had done everything a kindly English lady, who is the mother of a family, will do for a little orphan; and she now came to bid good-bye to Clive, for the gentleman who had the honour of owning her as wife would, being punctual to a minute, call in their quiet brougham to take her home.

"‘I found him, dear Arthur,’ said this little special pleader, who, with that coquetry which the best women possess, knew, I fancy, how well she looked when pleading another's cause. ‘I found him, Arthur, looking, oh so ill, so worn and ill. If he does not marry her he will die, and she also. I know she will; oh, that single people knew each other's hearts as we, as——’

“‘As who?’ said her questioner.

“‘As married—as you or I do, Arthur,’ she said, placing her hand on my arm, and giving me that bribe which I never resisted. ‘He looked as ill,’ she continued archly, ‘as ill as you did, when you went to sacrifice yourself to Miss Blanche Amory. That journey brought you your wife, sir. You know it did. I rewarded you for your honourable conduct. But, Arthur,’ here the kind voice became sad, ‘but, Arthur, Clive must marry Ethel.’

“‘Let me not,’ returned the other person, growling Shakespeare—

“Let me not, unto the marriage of true hearts,
Admit impediments.”

But how will your ladyship——’

“‘It must be done,’ cried Mrs. Laura; and she went

away from behind my study chair, with a determination about her which gave me comfort, for I knew the pride in deep humility, the sad dangerous feeling, of poor Clive's heart.

"It was, therefore, I think, to Mrs. Laura's generalship that we may attribute the meeting which took place between Clive and Ethel a few days after this, and about eighteen months after Rosa's death. The broad-shouldered, bearded, young fellow was manifestly suffering much; he painted continually, and even won fame by his art, but at the pace he was working, feeling, and thinking, he would soon have reached that winning post some men take seventy years in reaching. Something must turn the current of his days; something did.

"He had again painted all day with the same sad questioner by his side, the same unconquerable love to bear him company; and in the evening had sat as usual, after plucking at his beard, and throwing himself into the attitude of the *écorché* of Michael Angelo, which stood upon his mantel. At last he sank down again, and thought sadly, deeply as before. He started up at last and spoke—

"‘Oh, Ethel, Ethel,’ he said; ‘how can I hope, as I am, tempest-tossed and frayed; how can I dare to hope for your love? not love, I have that, God help me, little as I deserve it; but how can I dare to offer my life's service to you, to you so noble, so pure, so fresh?’

"‘I am your beadsman, Ethel, your pensioner, your beggar. The very money I buried my poor father with was yours; I know it, though I could not trace it; but I know your generous heart. And I—I—why, once I almost hated you, in the intense wildness of my love. Oh, Ethel, Ethel, without you I die; and yet how can I, dare I, hope, Ethel, dear Ethel?’

"A low clear voice from the half-opened studio door answered him: 'I am here, Clive; here.'

"The young man started and sprang forward. She entered like a queen; her beautiful head held high, her eyes downcast and full of love, her bosom heaving and swelling as she came to him.

"'Clive, dear Clive, I know how you love me, how you have loved me. The fault of this pain, this dreadful separation, was mine, not yours; and oh, dear Clive, how much, oh how much have I paid for that sin of coquetry and pride.'

"The young fellow, beside himself, sought to kneel and kiss her robe, but she restrained him.

"'No,' she said, joining her pretty hands in the humblest supplication, but with such a look as a queen might well have worn. 'No, dear Clive, it is not your duty now; it is mine, Clive, mine, to punish me. You asked me to wed you, once and twice, Clive, in earnest words, and a thousand times by looks I understood; it is my turn now, dear Clive. I will love you ever, and nurse your little boy; will you, will you take me for a wife?'

"I suppose any one can fancy the answer, for if they cannot, the poor scribe who writes these lines cannot undertake to give it. I fancy, indeed, it was not spoken. I fancy, a gasp of joy, a fall upon the knees of one penitent heart-stricken sinner, thanking God for His great goodness in blessing him with such a woman; and then an embracing, as one may imagine, and a kiss, kiss, kiss; oh Clive! oh Ethel! oh wandering stricken hearts, why did you not know each other; how could you live so long apart and lonely?"

As we are on the subject of imitations, I quote a poem that was written by my father, in

the style of Swinburne's "Dolores." It came out in *The Britannia*, a magazine edited by Arthur A'Beckett and illustrated by Matt Morgan. Burnand and others were amongst its contributors. In the first number the following poem appeared :—

IN THE ABYSS.

"Deus mi, clamo per diem, et non exaudis ; et nocte, et non est
silentium mihi."—PSALMUS xxii. 2.

"Oh, World, thy ways we must sever !
Oh, creatures of false joys and cares !
We are blank with the blindness of weeping,
And torn with the torture of tears !
Oh, weariness endless in waiting !
Oh, darkness where never comes light !
Oh, hungry love haunted with hating,
Is there rest in the night ?

We have prayed with the prayers of the faithful,
We have hoped with the hope of the true ;
We have hated with heart-hate the hateful,
We have craved for deep comfort from you.
But the heavens are emptied ; their Ruler
Looks on with a passionless gaze ;
And Time's endless progression is wasting
Weary nights, weary days.

There's no hope nor sweet help in the heavens,
We suffer, we sink, die in vain ;
And the leaden cloud-rift hath no leaven,
There's no rent in our garment of pain.

Vain, vain is the votary's crying,
Or his dumb, dark despite of despair,
For while prone at thy altar we're lying,
And Thou, God, art—where?

All the fanes that we builded are useless,
All the gods that we glorified vain,
All the oracles dumb; we have listened
But to cries of deep anguish and pain!
The pretence of the priest hath long perished;
He knoweth no more than we know,
And the weary way we tread, he treadeth,
He will go where we go.

We rejoiced in thy beauty, O Venus!
In thy wisdom, Athenë, in vain;
In the thunder of Zeus—grew between us
Dim distrust and perplexity's pain.
No prayer pierced the heavens to reach them,
No help ever came to our cry,
Then we hugged other gods to our bosom,
Still we live—and we die.

And the gray grave will gape for its tenant,
The slack night will comfort us naught,
The world flowers fade on our breast, love,
Lost the battle we fiercely have fought.
So, World and thy ways, I defy thee,
No Lethé hath cure for my care.
Do thy worst—and for comfort I'll hie me
To the depths of despair."

The Britannia was published in 1869, and
in *The Examiner* of 10th January of that year
there is a review which says:—

“‘In the Abyss’ is a fine poem, the authorship of which was apparent without the aid of the initials A. S. The musical rhythm and elegant diction of Mr. Algernon Swinburne *proclaim their diction as unmistakably as the voice of Jacob and the hands of Esau.*”

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In 1856 my father records in his diary: “All is bustle and confusion; one cannot write nor do anything.” This was due to his father being ill in Wharton Street for many weeks. They feared he would die, but he rallied, and was moved to his own house in Wimpole Street.

He lingered for some weeks, and died on the morning of Good Friday, 21st of March. When his will was read it was found that he had run through £20,000 of his own and £30,000 left him by his mother; all he bequeathed to his children was a lawsuit. With this incubus my father struggled for years, going through the tortures of a Chancery suit, which seemed as though it would never end, and which, like all such suits, continually kept its victims alternating between hope and despair. There are many passages in my father’s diaries referring to this unhappy lawsuit, and I may remark here that the estate never came to us. The suit was tried in

Ireland and here, but my father finally lost, and the costs nearly ruined him.

About this time, in some of his walks round Clerkenwell, my father saw St. John's Gate, a most interesting relic of Old London. It is the old South Gate of the ancient priory of St. John of Jerusalem. The Knights Hospitallers flourished for upwards of four hundred years in Clerkenwell, the hospital being originally dedicated to St. John the Cypriote, Patriarch of Alexandria, who, when the Saracens first took Jerusalem in the seventeenth century, sent food and money to the Christians. After some years the Order renounced John the Patriarch, and took for their patron St. John the Baptist. Their troubles began in Henry VIII.'s reign, and some of the knights fled to Malta, which the Emperor Charles V. had ceded to them. Queen Mary restored the Order, but Elizabeth again drove them to Malta.

Many remarkable historical scenes took place at the Priory, Clerkenwell. Mr. Walter Thornbury tells us that in 1212 "King John spent a month there;" that in "1483 a royal council was held at St. John's, at which Richard III. disavowed his intention of espousing his niece,

Elizabeth of York." The Princess Mary lived there in great pomp, and sometimes visited her brother Edward VI. in great state. In Elizabeth's reign Tilney, Master of the Queen's Revels, resided there, and revels were rehearsed in the great hall. Priory and church have long since vanished ; the modern houses in St. John's Square are mostly built on the old rubble walls of the hospital. The Gate still stands, and here, in 1731, Cave, an enterprising printer and publisher, took up his abode, and employed Dr. Johnson to write the parliamentary debates in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, on the cover of which is a picture of St. John's Gate. The rooms in the Gate house are panelled in oak, and the "grand hall," the room over the archway, is approached by an Elizabethan staircase. In this room, in the time of Cave, Mr. Garrick took the leading comic character in Fielding's "Mock Doctor," and we are told "the performance gave great amusement and satisfaction" to the sober-minded Cave, his patron.

In 1857, when my father saw the Gate, at its base was a public-house called the Jerusalem Tavern, one of the entrances to which was cut through the angle of the projecting Gate tower.

This tavern was kept by a Mr. Foster, who took great interest in the place, and was never tired of expatiating on its past glories. He showed my father the room over the Gateway where Johnson, Garrick, and Goldsmith had spent so many pleasant hours. My father was looking for a room in which to start a club, and I can imagine his pleasure in the old Gateway. The room over the Gate would be the very thing. Mr. Foster had no objection, and my father lost no time in getting Mr. Henry Marston (the actor), and a few others who sympathised with him in his scheme, to come and see the place. Here I will quote an account of how the club was founded, Mr. Church, the hon. secretary, having kindly furnished me with the particulars.

“The old-fashioned social and literary club called ‘The Urban Club’ is now nearly forty years old. It owes its origin to the late James Hain Friswell.

“So far back as 1854 he had written a play on an Italian subject, and was anxious that it should be represented. A great admirer of Henry Marston, one of Phelps’s most able coadjutors at old Sadler’s Wells Theatre, although perfectly unknown to the actor, Mr. Friswell forwarded the MS. to him, adding, that his opinion on the acting merits of the piece would be an important favour. The actor in a courteous reply stated that it would be a pleasure to grant the request, and, moreover, asked the young author to call

at his residence in Baker Street, Lloyd Square. This Mr. Friswell did, on a Saturday evening in July 1855. It proved eventful in the life of the young literary man, for Marston, after a long conversation on the merits of the piece, proposed that he should accompany him to a literary club of which he (Marston) was a member. It was the 'Re-union,' which met three times a week at the Bedford Head, in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden—the 'Owls' Roost' of Mr. Tom Robertson's comedy 'Society.' Here, under the wing of the actor, Mr. Friswell came face to face with E. L. Blanchard, Jonas Levy, the hon. secretary, Stirling Coyne, and many other professional men. An intimacy soon sprang up between them, and Mr. Friswell's name was added to the roll of the 'Re-union.' In a few months he became one of its most prominent and popular members.

"One evening in 1856, in returning with several clubbites who resided in North London, the possibility of forming a society on the same lines nearer home occurred to him, and he broached the subject to Mr. Marston, Mr. Levy, and Mr. Coyne. When Mr. Friswell suggested another club, it was always his idea that it should never clash with that in Covent Garden. To use his own words: 'Let it be for local convenience, a chapel of ease to the mother church.' All heartily sympathised and agreed to his proposal, and Mr. Friswell lost no time in seeking a resort; but he was months in finding one. At length he brought welcome news. It was to the effect that Mr. Benjamin Foster, proprietor of St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell, would be pleased to put the great hall of that ancient building at their disposal. Accordingly, the four gentlemen, Messrs. Hain Friswell, Jonas Levy, Henry Marston, and Stirling Coyne, met for social purposes the next Wednesday evening, and in the late autumn of 1856 the club was started."

They first met on a Friday night—so the club was called “The Friday Knights.” In a few months the club rapidly increased, and then, as it was held in the room where Edward Cave, under the name of Sylvanus Urban, edited and published *The Gentleman's Magazine*, it was unanimously decided that it should henceforth be known as “The Urban Club.” The following gentlemen were some of the first members: Blanchard, Blythe, Brough, Brunt, Coyne, Draper, Friswell, Marston, Levy, Hollingshead, and Crawford Wilson.

The club still exists, but not at St. John's Gate. One of its distinguishing features is a dinner on Shakespeare's birthday, the 23rd of April, but most of its original members have answered the roll-call to another world.

CHAPTER V

The Train, one of the first shilling magazines—"Sham Pamphlets"—Writes for *Chambers's Journal*—Proposes to start a business as heraldic engraver—Reads and lectures at Worcester and London—*The Welcome Guest*—"Sham," a novel written in earnest—"Diamonds and Spades"—"Ghost Stories"—*The Family Herald*.

IN 1856 was started *The Train*, almost, if not quite, the first shilling magazine. Many men who have since become well known in literature and art were on its staff. I quote here an amusing paragraph in one of the newspapers of the time: I say amusing, because to call the sober-minded, clever little magazine "fast" in these days makes one smile and wonder what was "slow;" though, as the critic remarks, "fast" is not mentioned in a disparaging sense:—

"*The Train* is the 'fast' magazine of London. We do not use the word in a very disparaging sense, for we recognise the vivacity and truth of many of the sketches of 'life' in this young periodical, but still the tone is 'fast'—for we must use a slang word to characterise a slang style. For instance, Mr. E. H. Yates supplies an interesting paper

descriptive of the music halls of London ; but, instead of some appropriate title, he calls it 'Soothing the Savage Breast,' a trick borrowed from Mr. Dickens and *Household Words*, where every contribution is headed by a title intended to be funny and having only some far-fetched allusion to the subject of the essay. Despite this style and its wonderful variety of affectations, the papers in *The Train* are sometimes very pleasant ; the men who contribute to it write more about life itself (always London life, however) than about literature, and they never bore you with learned or scientific essays. The 'Sham Pamphlets' are very good."

Another paragraph says :—

"*The Train* has its usual collection of lively articles, the 'Sham Pamphlets' taking a deserved first place."

Then it goes on to say :—

"There is too much talk about literature as a profession and about its machinery, while the allusions to the individual experiences of writers are too many. *Quasi* personal revelations have been overdone by the light writers of the day, and we have too much of the court circular of coxcombry, which tells us where and how the writer and his friends dined or travelled, and how disinclined he was next morning to furnish copy. These personal touches were fresh and novel from the pen of old Montaigne, but they are now as used up as Mr. Charles Dickens's short sentences, or Alexander Dumas' shorter paragraphs."

What would this critic say now could he see

the interviews—how every little detail is gone into, not only as regards “literary machinery,” to teach the public how to write, but domestic affairs? Twaddle and vulgarity have come very much to the front when a well-known man goes into details about his attack of influenza, and maunders over his bronchitis-kettle; and sham and snobbery are painfully to the fore when we read in our papers how many times a statesman chews his food, and how he “sings in his bath.” *The Train* went into no such petty details, the reading public was not so large then, and perhaps more particular, so the “fast” magazine of those days would no doubt be considered particularly “slow” now.

My father was writing at this time for *Chambers's Journal*, and also for *The Eclectic Review*. He was employed in the spring of 1856 by Messrs. Hunt & Roskell, the well-known jewelers of Bond Street. With them he remained for seven years, holding a responsible position. I may mention here that my father took a great interest in heraldry, searching for the coats of arms of different well-known families, and supplying them. He took this up entirely as a hobby, but had so many applications and letters from

various people, that at one time he seriously thought of starting a business, and would have done so if he could have persuaded his father-in-law to join him; but Mr. Rumley, who, from my father's sixteenth year, had been as good as a father to him, was now falling into bad health; though still a man in the prime of life, his work was nearly over, and he died of a wasting disease in 1858. Since then Mr. Culleton, Mr. Moring, and others, have developed quite flourishing businesses as heraldic engravers.

In 1856 my father gave some lectures and readings from "Houses with their Fronts Off" and "Ghost Stories." From the following letter, written to a friend, he had an idea of lecturing on the "Curiosities of Crime." He says:—

"I want to take—or be engaged at—the Penton Institute, to give a series of six lectures on the 'Curiosities of Crime': 1. 'Palmer and Poisoning;' 2. 'Fauntleroy and the Forgers;' 3. 'Brownrigg and Barbarity;' perhaps three would do. Mental analysis would be extensively and usefully employed therein, and I fancy the thing would take. By next Monday night I could do 'Palmer.' I want some one in the meantime to bill the neighbourhood, and to go into calculations as to expenses and tickets."

"The year 1857 commences quietly, but, apparently, prosperously," he records at the beginning

of his diary ; he is hopeful, too, about his father's money.

"The estate of the poor governor would appear finally to be about to descend to us, or rather what remains of it. . . . Literature is dull, and little seems moving."

The stoppage of *The Train* was a great disappointment to the young literary men who wrote for it. The press, too, seemed to regret it, for I find a paragraph to this effect :—

"We miss this month [it stopped in July 1858], from its place amongst the magazines, *The Train*. We miss the vigorous exposure of the 'Shams' and conventionalities of life, which the world is too apt to gloss over, by the able pen of Hain Friswell. We miss the quaint, but eloquent, poetry of Godfrey Turner. But why should we go through the well-known names of its contributors, who are and will surely make their way with a discerning public."

Of the year 1858 my father says : "It begins with better promise than the last three or four." On 1st May an illustrated magazine called *The Welcome Guest* was started by Henry Vizetelly ; it was edited by Robert Brough. Amongst its writers were the Greenwood brothers, Samuel Lover, Edmund Yates, G. A. Sala, Edward Draper, Watts Phillips, James Hannay, and others ;

while its artists were Macquoid, Phiz, Kenney Meadows, Harrison Weir, &c. My father wrote articles and stories in *The Welcome Guest*, a weekly letter which had been running for two years in *The Bury Guardian*, besides articles in *John Bull* and *The Eclectic Review*. To quote his own words, "the year ends badly." The lawsuit, which was tried in Ireland, he was seriously anxious about, and he notes that "the Coventry and Birmingham property must be looked into." Mr. Rumley's death is a grief to him. In fact it seems to have been a year of family misfortunes, which, to say the least, is a distraction where brain work is concerned, yet my father was nearly as industrious as usual.

Three books were published that year. The first, "Ghost Stories and Phantom Fancies," was a collection of stories of a weird kind, as its title shows. It was brought out by Richard Bentley, and was very well reviewed. One critic speaks of Mr. Friswell as one of the "few popular writers to whom we feel grateful for a pure, nervous, and thoroughly English style."

The title appears to have been appropriated by Mrs Crowe, author of "The Night Side of Nature," &c. Here is a letter from her to my

father, together with his reply thereto, and I quote them because that of my father gives his opinion of ghosts:—

“CLIFTON, *Dec.* 4.

“SIR,—I delayed answering your letter till I had read your book.

“I have now done so, and find yours are not ghost stories at all, but burlesques. As mine *are* ghost stories of a serious character, I do not apprehend that the works will interfere with each other.

“You are quite mistaken in thinking your title ‘Ghost Stories’ original; there have been collections published and so called before. I had two in my possession formerly, when I was investigating the subject; and ‘Ghost Stories,’ or ‘Stories of Ghosts,’ is a title any one may claim who relates *bonâ fide* instances of spiritual appearances; but I cannot think it an appropriate title for your book, which relates no such instances.

“I have written to Mr. Newby that if he thinks it advisable to make a little change in the title he can do so.”

“14 WHARTON STREET, W.C.,

“*Dec.* 6, 1858.

“MADAM,—Will you pardon me for saying that your letter shows scant courtesy to me, whose note to you was certainly not wanting in civility.

“Our question is not of ghosts but of titles, nor do I wish to travel out of the record. On your plea that mine are not ‘real ghosts,’ I might appropriate Mr. Dickens’s title of the ‘Christmas Carol,’ because it was not a carol, and, further, because collections of carols have been before

published. Such a proceeding might deceive some of the public, but would be, in my view, eminently dishonest.

"You waive the question as to not having seen my title; you delay answering until you have read the book; all the time your advertisements appearing and directing the stream of sale from one channel to another. Pardon the slang if I ask you whether this is quite 'the thing'?"

"My ghosts were purposely burlesques, for I hold that every ghost must be a work of fiction produced either by the imagination of the artist, the simplest and honestest way, or from a disordered digestion, an over-wrought or morbid brain, a guilty conscience, or a diseased retina. You are aware, no doubt, more fully than I of the instances of authentic ghosts which have been exorcised by blood-letting or aperient medicines. The machinery of the 'real ghost' is so clumsy, and of itself so migratory, that this creature of fiction stultifies itself; either it rises in ghosts of its grave clothes—Manchester textile fabrics perchance, never being indecent enough to appear naked—or it resuscitates the spirit of a chain, which, *credat Judæus*, rattles like good, sound iron.

"Therefore, I may find excuse for my burlesques, it being a fact that I never for a moment entertained the idea of a 'real' ghost, but left the vulgar phantom and bugbear to people of weak minds, disordered brains, or those professional believers who turn an honest penny by now and then publishing their creed.

"Hoping that for your own credit you will not persist in the appropriation of a silly title," &c.

"Diamonds and Spades" was the title of a short novel which went into several editions. By

some this book was spoken of as the most "vivid production of the author," the scenes in the reformatory and prison being drawn from actual observation. "Out and About," a book for boys, was published in 1858, and went into fresh editions for over thirty years. The press has praised it continually. Charles Mackay says :—

"64 LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS,
"Dec. 5, 1859.

"Accept my thanks for kindly forwarding your new volume 'Out and About.' It is not always I can find or make time to read a book, but I have read yours with very great pleasure. It is no easy matter to write for boys or for children generally, but it seems to me that you have the secret of it."

In 1859 my father was still writing for *The Bury Guardian*, *John Bull*, &c. In *The Welcome Guest* he finished a novel called "Trumps ;" it was written by George William Curtis, a well-known American author. The story was published over here in advance of its issue in the United States. My father was asked to finish it in consequence of the winding up of *The Welcome Guest*. I have been told by several people who read both that my father's was by far the most natural and artistic ending.

In one of the papers at this period there appeared a short article in praise of James Hain Friswell. Unfortunately there is not the name of the paper, nor the date. After sneering at the "mob of gentlemen who write with ease nowadays," and of whom the paper predicts "not half-a-dozen will be read by the third or fourth generation," it goes on to say that it is not going to

"write a diatribe against literary triflers, but to jot down a few impressions concerning those who bid fair to pass the Rubicon of light literature and take up a position on more solid ground. Mr. J. H. Friswell is a young writer who is making rapid headway in the mastery of his arduous profession, and distancing by long chalks his lighter-ballasted brethren. Our attention was attracted by his contributions to the various periodicals of the day—a series of articles which, although ostensibly written to amuse, betrayed, in addition to their easy and graceful style, a certain thoughtfulness seldom met with in magazine sketches. Our good opinion of Mr. Friswell's talent was confirmed by the appearance of (now some years ago) a very clever little work entitled 'Houses with their Fronts Off,' which, though published in a cheap form, at once raised its author into notice—which is much in an age when everybody writes."

About this time a Mr. Tomlins introduced my father to Mr. William Stevens, proprietor of *The Family Herald*. Mr. Stevens was in

great trouble. Mr. Shepherd Smith, his leader-writer, was dead, and no one could take his place; they had tried many men, and all had failed. My father was asked to contribute an occasional article and answers to correspondents. Before the end of the year he was permanently engaged, and in sickness and in health he continued this work till the day of his death; in fact, the essays were written in advance, and the last appeared three weeks after his death. His articles greatly improved the circulation of the paper, many clergymen and scholars taking it in solely on account of the essay. It was only the other day that I was told by one who knew him that the Dean of — used to take in *The Family Herald* only to read the articles. Once only did my father give up this work, and that was in 1876, when he had an attack of congestion of the brain, and was forbidden by the doctors to do anything. Then for six weeks the essay was written by another hand, and this was the only break for nearly nineteen years. The answers to correspondents were also written by him. Many of the letters were very interesting; some were unhappy, and others dreadful; in fact, a lawyer or a priest could

not hear more confessions of sin and crime than were sometimes sent to the editor of *The Family Herald*. When, in after years, his friend, Canon Kingsley, urged him to go into the Church, and he would sometimes regret he had not done so, my mother and many friends told him he had a "higher calling and a larger congregation than any clergyman." Theological discussions were not at all uncommon in the correspondence page. Sometimes he had pathetically beautiful letters, thanking him for his advice, and calling down all sorts of blessings on his path. Once or twice, I remember, a grateful correspondent sent him a small present, and he was almost childishly pleased with it, showing it to every one. I have heard people question the genuineness of that page, but I can assure them (and if I could not, Mr. Stevens can) that the letters are actual letters, and not made up by the editor or any of the staff.

My father seldom wrote privately to a correspondent, though they generally sent their name and address, but now and then he broke through the rule. In one case it was to a lady, who, under the name of "Fabiola," wrote some exceedingly pretty poems; she wrote to him in the

correspondence page, and hers was a somewhat sad life.

Well educated, with more than ordinary talent and with high aspirations, she was yet bound down, from a sense of duty, to uncongenial work of so constant and fatiguing a nature that there was no time for intellectual pursuits, and body and brain both suffered. Martyrs to duty grow more and more rare, but in the sixties, I am told, the phrase "living one's own life" was not known, and "Fabiola," I am sure, would never have been brought to the philosophical idea that parents are unnecessary evils, and so may be left to take their chance. But hers was a thorny path, and something of her troubles she must have put into those pathetic verses, and that letter, written so long ago; for my father's quick sympathy was awakened, and he not only answered her in print, but wrote to encourage her in well-doing:—

"I have been so pleased with your poetry, and especially with your letters. I have had the verses printed for the first page of the *F. H.*, and shall be glad to receive more. Anything I have said to you in print I shall be happy to repeat in letters, should need be. I believe you are living a noble life, one of *duty*, and I can only pray you to continue it. I very seldom indeed, except when I can do some little good, write to any correspondent, and only

now in confidence give you my name and address. My name as leader-writer of the *F. H.* has been carefully concealed for eight years, and though I am not ashamed of my work, publicity would do little good."

In another letter he says :—

"‘Father Confessor’ I am often called. I am afraid few people know what an ‘extern’ is, but I accept the name. Yes, few people see so much of human nature as I do. For eight years I have held my chair, and I could show you some letters that would make your hair stand on end."

Again he writes encouraging her :—

"74 GREAT RUSSELL STREET,

"*Christmas Eve.*

"DEAR FABIOLA,—*Don't get tired ; you're too young. But be jolly and merry ; the good time is coming, I can assure you. To the true, God is true. Patience and faith.*"

The Family Herald was, I believe, one of the first papers that had a correspondents' page. In a magazine called *The Sphinx*, sent to my father by Mr. Stevens in 1868, there is an article praising the journal and describing the correspondents' page :—

"A very curious, a very miscellaneous, a very instructive and very sensible page it is. There used to be—and may be now—some doubts cast on the authenticity of all the letters, the receipt of which is acknowledged and the contents of which are commented upon in this page. Of the genuineness of every scrap of the corre-

spondence mentioned in the 'correspondents' page' of *The Family Herald* we have not the slightest doubt whatever. Sometimes it devotes two pages—or six columns—of the smallest type to the service of the innumerable persons, of all ages, sexes, and conditions, who address it upon pretty nearly every subject under the sun—ay, and over the sun, and even in the sun—from the most abstruse conjectures of theology and the deepest passions of the heart, to trivial questions in grammar and recipes for removing freckles. It seems absurd, at first thought, to imagine persons stirred to the profoundest depths of their being by the most cruel griefs or heartrending doubts, rushing to pens, ink, and paper, and beseeching the advice or sympathy of a paper and an utter stranger to them; but a regular reader of the correspondents' page of *The Family Herald* can easily understand many other readers getting to look upon the holder of the pen which every week calms so much distraction, consoles so much pain, and bears with so much folly, as a kind old friend to whom they, in their trouble, can freely turn for comfort and advice. With much that is advanced in this correspondents' page we cordially disagree: we demur to some of its arguments, and we disagree with many of its opinions; but we think every sensible and just person must acknowledge its general soundness, its invariable goodness, and the honesty of its purpose.

"But the part of *The Family Herald* which is most interesting to us is the leading article. This is written in a style and with an ability which could never be expected from the appearance of the little paper. Its leading articles are invariably high-class essays on the most interesting subjects. No small amount of power is shown in the selection of the topics it treats of. How it manages

to hit upon so many good subjects is one of the most remarkable, and not the least gratifying, of its points of excellence. Its topics are, for the most part, abstract themes, such as are not regarded by the body of the press, which seizes hold of concrete matters and passing events. Consequently its essays are not so ephemeral as the generality of articles, and its back numbers may be read with pleasure and profit. It is only seldom that it handles contemporary occurrences, and it devotes—especially at present—much of its attention to most interesting criticism of literature, literary men, and literary matters. In this department also we must confess to disagreeing with much that is laid down; but disagreement is, amongst reflective persons, a matter of course; and besides, one may often learn more from dissent than from concurrence. No doubt there are many people in the world who never can see ability upon any side but the one on which they are themselves; but the opinion of such persons is of little consequence; and others will agree that whatever sentiments are advocated in the leading columns of *The Family Herald* are maintained with power. Its articles would shine in more ambitious journals. Indeed, some of these might well take more than one lesson from their unassuming little contemporary.”

Another periodical says, in 1870:—

“*The Family Herald* has unfortunately no imitators; it is *sui generis*. The essays are, to those who read and study them, a never-failing source of true knowledge and real delight. A high moral and religious feeling pervades every word, and the noblest lessons of peace, forbearance, charity, self-denial, and every Christian virtue, are invariably inculcated.”

CHAPTER VI

Weldon's Magazine and Register of Facts—*The Leader*—*Once a Week*—*City Press*—Sees Thackeray—Begins "Footsteps to Fame"—Very depressed—"Out and About"—Becomes acquainted with Lord Brougham—Wishes to be introduced to William Chambers—Captain and Mrs. Burton—Spirit-rapping—Mr. Foster the Medium—The Davenport brothers—"The Coal of Fire"—Letter to Mrs. S. C. Hall.

"THE year [1860] begins, thank God, prosperously. We are settled in a new house.¹ Notwithstanding my legal losses and expenses I still have money, and am absolutely better off than before. Literature seems to promise more, my last book having been successful."

Then the Old Man of the Sea, the lawsuit, is spoken of, and he continues :—

"In Ireland we still hope to conquer, and possibly the worst is over here. During the past year we have had many opportunities of leading a quieter life, and had manifold and visible blessings, for which God be praised. Amen."

On Monday, 9th of January, he went to Macaulay's funeral, but only just records the fact. In

¹ Southampton Street, Bloomsbury.

this year he joined the St. George's Rifles, and added drill to his other work, besides some long marches.

Under the somewhat cumbersome title of *Weldon's Register of Facts and Occurrences relating to Literature, the Sciences, and the Arts*, the late Mr. Walter Weldon, afterwards distinguished by his great achievement in industrial chemistry (the well-known chlorine process), who was in 1860 a working journalist, started his magazine, which, as he says in his introductory note, was not a "mere register," but critically reviewed the various matters brought before it.

Most of the articles were anonymous, the contributors being Hollingshead, Thornbury, G. A. Sala, Hain Friswell, E. Yates, Godfrey Turner, W. M. Rossetti, and others. The only signed article by my father is one on "Publius Syrus," the Latin poet, whose pithy line, "Judex damnatur cum nocens absolvitur," forms the motto of the *Quarterly Review*. The article appeared in the May number of 1862.

In 1860, besides his articles in *The Family Herald*, he was writing for *The Leader*, *Once a Week*, *The City Press*, *The Literary Gazette*, and *The Illustrated London News*, in which he wrote

"The Echoes of the Week" whenever Mr. Sala was away; and as this often occurred, "The Echoes" were sometimes written by my father for a year or more.

In this year he made the acquaintance of Thackeray, and I fancy he was a little disappointed in his hero. He always said it was "a mistake to know public people;" and when I was growing up, and very anxious to know my favourite authors and actors, he used to say:—

"Why destroy your illusions? That author, whose characters say such charming things, whose men are athletes, or scholars full of epigram, is himself a nervous little man with sloping shoulders. There's no brilliant conversation in him; he looks melancholy and bored in company. Read and enjoy his books, but don't wish to see him; you would not like it, nor would he."

As an instance of the truth of this, I quote three examples. My father was very fond of taking me about with him in my holidays, so that at a very early age I became acquainted with authors, publishers, and printers. On one occasion we were walking down Wellington Street, and just passing the office of *Household Words*, when a hansom cab stopped, and out stepped a gaily-dressed gentleman; his bright green waist-

coat and vivid scarlet tie any one would have noticed, but the size of the nosegay in his button-hole riveted my attention. My father introduced me, and I, who had only seen engravings of the Maclise portrait and photographs, was astonished to find myself face to face with Charles Dickens.

Another time, at Charing Cross station, my father suddenly stopped and shook hands with a gentleman who stepped out of a train. He would have been tall, but his shoulders seemed somewhat bent, his hair was long, so was his beard; he wore an ugly Inverness cape and a large slouch hat; he looked like a bandit in a melodrama; and I thought him some poor actor who had come out in some of the stage properties. As he talked to my father I was conscious of his looking every now and then at me. At last he said, "So this is your daughter; you must be proud of such a daughter," and he shook hands with me, and added, "and I am sure you are proud of your father." "Oh, I am," I said very quickly; and he smiled again, and, turning to my father, said, "I envy you your daughter," then he sighed, and left us. He seemed so sad, I felt quite sorry for him, as I watched him walk slowly up the platform.

"Well," said my father, when we were seated

in the train, "what do you think of your hero who wrote 'In Memoriam' and 'The Idylls of the King'?"

"Was *that* Tennyson?"

"Certainly; I said so, as I went up to speak to him. He is a handsome man as well as celebrated. You ought to be proud to think he shook hands with you, but you are disappointed."

"I am proud," I said, "but—of course it is my fault," I added, and then I told him I had taken the poet for a third-rate actor.

My father smiled, and said, half sadly, "It is a pity, perhaps, that men of genius cannot dress more like ordinary mortals."

I was only a child, but children of a larger growth make the same mistakes. We idealise people and expect too much of them. Even Thackeray was not proof against this failing common to all hero-worshippers. It is shown in an amusing story told by Mrs. Thackeray Ritchie, and quoted by Mr. Clement Shorter in his recent book on Charlotte Brontë.

Thackeray asked the Carlyles, Mrs. Crowe, Mrs. Proctor, and several of his habitual friends to meet the author of "Jane Eyre"; and the party was a failure, because every one expected

too much of the quiet little authoress. The narrator says:—

“It was a gloomy and silent evening. Every one waited for the brilliant conversation which never began at all. Miss Brontë retired to the sofa in the study, and murmured a low word now and then to our kind governess, Miss Truelock. The room looked dark, the lamp began to smoke, the conversation grew dimmer and more dim, the ladies sat round expectant; my father was much too perturbed by the gloom and the silence to be able to cope with it at all. Mrs. Brookfield, who was near the corner in which Miss Brontë was sitting, leant forward with a little commonplace, since brilliance was not to be the order of the evening. ‘Do you like London, Miss Brontë?’ she said. Another silence, a pause, then Miss Brontë answers, ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ very gravely.”

One can imagine the little lady, from her wild Yorkshire moors, sitting in the room amongst several strange ladies who “sat round expectant,” and who no doubt gazed at her; and this not being ordeal enough, there were two such men as Thackeray and Carlyle present. Was it wonderful that she took refuge close to the “kind governess”? Poor little Charlotte Brontë, perhaps *she too expected some “brilliant conversation.”*

My father was a young and enthusiastic man when he was introduced to Thackeray, and I can imagine his pride and pleasure, and his anxiety to

make a favourable impression on his hero. But it was perhaps too much to expect Thackeray to be gracious to the man he accuses of imitating him, though he adds, "I dare say you are no more aware of the resemblance, than I was, years ago, that I emulated Fielding!" If two men take the same models, it is difficult for them not to write in the same style. My father no more enjoyed being accused of imitating Thackeray than did that great man like such comments as these: "Quite as good as anything of Thackeray's;" "Thackeray could not have done better." Another critic remarks that my father "is treading too closely on the heels of Mr. Thackeray," and he adds: "We are quite sure his talents are equal to the task of creating for himself an independent position." Critics are fond of comparisons, but they are but a small portion of the public, and it is a pity authors let their remarks embitter their relations with each other. Some few years later my father might have written for *The Cornhill*, Mr. Thackeray being the editor; but as he (Thackeray) declined to let my father sign his articles, or in any way to advertise who wrote them, my father would not agree to his conditions. This made no difference in his admiration for the novelist's

works, and he always considered "Vanity Fair" the greatest novel of the age.

My father was fond of society, and liked dancing, and in this year he went to several balls, as well as dinners, where he was always down for a speech, being an adept in that art. As a member of the St. George's Rifles he went to a review and took part in a sham fight. I mention these facts, as so many remember him only as an invalid.

He wrote in this year a play, "Only an Actor," which was accepted by Dillon, of "Belphegor" celebrity; and he was busy on a book called "Footsteps to Fame"—a book to open other books. Gladstone first wrote to him, but there is no record upon what subject, merely the entry, "Letter from Gladstone," and a further notice on 3rd December, "Should look up Gladstone." I fancy in those days they were very good friends; by that I do not mean that they were companions, but they thought alike. In later years my father often attacked Mr. Gladstone's policy, but he always had a great admiration for his learning and his eloquence.

At the end of 1860 my father was greatly troubled by the illness of my mother. The

doctors feared she would be a permanent invalid. This caused him much anxiety. She was ill for two years, and during that time confined to her bed or the sofa ; besides which, he lost his sister, Mme. Andronesco. So the record in the diary runs thus :—

“The year closes sadly, not pecuniarily so. The future is as dark as ever, though I have earned much more.”

Like all sanguine and high-spirited people, my father was at times very melancholy and depressed ; that this was so is evident from the following letter from Mr. Edward Draper, a solicitor, an old friend of my father's, and well known in literary circles :—

“PIMLICO, S.W., *Dec.* 28, 1860.

“I cannot refrain from offering you my condolences. I am truly sorry for both you and Mrs. Friswell. I feel, nevertheless, a certainty that this is only a trial for both, and not a foreshadowing of deeper affliction. A short time will find you all in better health and spirits. Pray express our heartfelt sympathy to Mrs. Friswell, and do not become despondent. Much cause for consolation still remains to you—in worldly expectations your reputation is bright ; you have loving friends, and I cannot imagine even from your sad letter that any incurable or fatal malady has visited your home. It is a matter of time, constitution, youth, and comforts, and all are on your

side. I should throughout this letter have translated you by 'vos,' not 'tu,' and 'your' by 'vester,' not 'tuus.' The memory of past troubles will, I am sure, hereafter add to future happiness. Did you not now really feel relieved after you had written your dismal letter, in the full confidence that it was directed to sympathising hearts? I am sure you did, and we feel happy in such confidence, and hope sincerely that you will feel it has been well bestowed. For as Bacon says—but you know what he says in his 'Essay on Friendship'—and if you don't, you had better read it than trust to my clumsy memory, and then you will know about the advantageous participation of joys and griefs."

In spite of his depression, my father was very hopeful and courageous; he was not in the least of a weak or desponding nature, or he would not have lived as long as he did. His life was one of hard work, and in the latter years a long struggle against disease and death.

The memoranda at the beginning of the diary in 1861 is still melancholy:—

"The year begins in a very sad way; Emma is still confined to her bed. Lawsuit utterly against us—Fanny dead—I feel in myself greater resolution and strength; may God give me more, and also more faith. I am earning more at literature, and hope to do yet better. I find I have one or two firm friends; my children and my wife are very good and affectionate—we have no break of love at home."

This last sentence he writes, no doubt, thinking of his unhappy and lonely boyhood.

At this time he made the acquaintance of Lord Brougham, who presented him with some books, and from then till Lord Brougham's death they were very friendly. There are many letters from Lord Brougham, but they would be of no interest to the public. Mrs. S. C. Hall wrote the following to Mr. William Chambers, which he gave to my father :—

“BANNOW LODGE, BOLTONS,
“WEST BROMPTON, *May* 14.

“I am very glad to hear you are in town. I hope we may have the chance of seeing you, and, moreover, Mr. Hain Friswell requests to be introduced to you, and, indeed, I cannot see that he needs introduction of mine to any one; he is very well known to a large circle of readers, is greatly esteemed by many friends, and is well known to be on the staff of *The Saturday Review*—no small proof of his ability—if *not* of his *humanity*—but I am willing to believe that whatever is kind and good in *The Saturday* comes from his pen!—With cordial good wishes, my dear Sir, sincerely yours,

“ANNA MARIA HALL.”

In 1861 my father first became acquainted with Captain and Mrs. Burton, who very much admired

“Sham.” In a letter to my father Mrs. Burton says:—

“I am deep in it, and I am sure it will do good, one sees such pretentiousness nowadays in all classes, high, middle, and low. I think it shows wonderful observation, for you have given us something of *all* classes. I like the book more and more as it goes on, and parts are most touching and most true, but, indeed, all are the latter. It is rather presumptuous of me to give an opinion after the many flattering opinions of the press.”

From this time Captain and Mrs. Burton became familiar figures in our house. I can remember her, a tall, beautiful woman, my childish ideal of a princess. In fact, she and one other lady (Mrs. Edmunds, the wife of Dr. Edmunds) figured in all the fairy tales I read, as beautiful queens or princesses. But I was rather alarmed at Captain Burton: to my childish fancy he was fierce of aspect; with that sabre cut across his face, he looked to me like a bold buccaneer; but he was away, and so I did not see much of him. That my princess was not happy was as it should be; and that there was a prince somewhere called “dear Richard,” about whom she continually talked to my father and mother, and who was persecuted and oppressed, was in the natural

course of things. But I was puzzled to identify him, and I was worked up into a silent rage with "government," not that I understood in the least what "government" had done. That my father tried to help my princess in her troubles is evident from her letters, of which the following is a specimen:—

"I enclose you some papers that have been sent here by friends of my husband, and very grateful I am for such warm friends; perhaps you are one of them, I am sure you are. Read A. It is a very bad case and true, but we are dependent on the government, and at the present moment it would be injudicious to vex it, and bad taste in me to wish it. Throw aside A., and read B. All therein is true, and no more praise than he deserves, and no offence to government. Look at the reviewers. They are making a complete 'Aunt Sally' of the poor fellow, and he is in Africa, and can't stand up for himself; *you* will say he deserves it for his polygamy opinions. There is a man who has married one wife, who is a domestic man at home and a homesick man when away. I want you to do something; it is this. *The Times* is a noble paper; it appreciates the brave and clever, it defends the absent, it upholds the oppressed. Government robs us of £300 a year and £5000. The reviewers of a moral reputation. Take the memorandums A. and B. to Mr. Lucas. Ask him to put A. in the fire, but to let B. hear his own review of my husband's book in *The Times*; it will amply compensate me for all I have suffered on his account. Mr. Lucas can then pitch into the book as he likes, but let him

give him due praise first. I am certain Mr. Lucas would do this if he knew us. Please ask him yourself for me.— I am, yours sincerely and obliged,

“ISABEL BURTON.”

I am sorry I have not the papers mentioned as A. and B. ; no doubt they were returned to Mrs. Burton. The book was “Salt Lake City,” and though I am sure my father would not have agreed in any polygamous opinions, he was evidently prevailed upon to do what he could, for there is an entry in his diary to this effect: “Sat up and wrote defence of Captain Burton.”¹

In another long letter Mrs. Burton says: “I enclose my wrongs in nine separate papers.” In another she speaks of her husband having served his country “for twenty-nine years without pension, and it refuses to pay £15,000 owing to him.” In 1862 Captain Burton was consul at Fernando Po, and thence he wrote the following friendly note:—

“FERNANDO PO, *Feb.* 19, 1862.

“Excuse my not answering your note. The fact is I have just returned from an exploring ascent of the Cameroon Mountains.

“I send you a peculiar pipe of Ashantee make ; I should

¹ My father sympathised strongly with Captain Burton.

judge it to be steatite, and hope that you will keep it as a small souvenir. Accept my best thanks for all your kindness.—Yours truly,

“RICHARD F. BURTON.”

Then Mrs. Burton writes as follows :—

“16 EDGWARE ROAD.

“DEAR MR. FRISWELL,—I am glad you like the pipe. I am sure you have nothing to thank us for, and we owe you so much. I would rather come any day but Good Friday, and shall be just as pleased to see you and your wife as ever so many guests. I rather want another talk about spirit-rapping.—Believe me, yours sincerely,

“ISABEL BURTON.”

My father was very much interested in spirit-rapping, and attended many *séances*. On Monday, 24th of March 1862, he enters in his diary :—

“Appointment with Foster, the medium; meet him with Butlin. He tells us our names, writes the name Henrietta, my mother’s, on his arm, and that of C. T. B., Charles Thomas Butlin, brother to Butlin. Very much puzzled.”

I can remember my father speaking of this interview. I have many times heard him tell the story. He and Mr. Butlin hired a brougham and drove up to the medium’s lodgings, which were in one of the streets leading out of Bond Street.

The time was twelve o'clock, and it was a fine warm day, such as we sometimes have in March. They were shown up into a drawing-room furnished as rooms were in those days ; a Brussels carpet of vivid tints, a suite of furniture covered in crimson rep, a whatnot, a piano, and a large round table, which was not in the middle of the room, as was usually the case, covered with albums and keepsakes, arranged symmetrically round a glass shade, under which was an alabaster vase containing wax flowers. The wax flowers were on the top of the piano, the keepsakes were piled on the sofa, and the table was pushed into one of the windows, and had nothing on it (not even a cover) but some slips of paper and some ordinary lead pencils. My father and his friend had scarcely taken stock of these things, and noticed the large chimney-glass already in its summer dress of yellow net, when there entered a short, stout, flabby man, dressed, like the immortal Mantalini, in a bright dressing-gown wadded and lined with satin, his fat white hands adorned with handsome rings. The blinds were drawn up to their fullest extent, and the sun streamed into the room. Mr. Foster, with a languid air, took his seat with his back to the window ; Mr. Butlin and my father sat one on each

side of him, but at some distance from him and from each other. The medium appeared very hot, complained of the weather, and continually wiped his face with a profusely scented handkerchief. He said with a sigh, "I know you both; you are not what you represented yourselves to be; please write your names on two of these pieces of paper, fold them up, and place them in front of you." This they did, writing their false names only. Mr. Foster murmured that it was "not a good day for manifestations," and then he shivered and trembled, leant back in his chair and shut his eyes, appearing to go into a trance. He began to speak, telling my father that there was "a dark lady with long hair standing near him, and looking at him with great affection;" he described her, but my father demanded her name. Mr. Foster, again sighing and trembling, turned so ghastly that they feared he would faint; but he suddenly sat upright, opened his eyes, and stripped up his sleeve, and there, written in red, on the inside of his white arm, was Henrietta. It looked as if scratched with some sharp instrument. My father immediately seized Foster's wrist, and held it till the name slowly faded out, leaving the arm "as white as a woman's," my father added.

“You’ve not opened those pieces of paper,” said the medium ; and Mr. Butlin and my father opened them. The false names had a line through them, and underneath them was written John Rose Butlin, James Hain Friswell. Then Mr. Foster told them some family details which were perfectly true, but which were known only to themselves, and of which they had not thought for many years. He showed Mr. Butlin his brother’s name written like Henrietta on his arm, and it faded out in the same manner. All this was done without his moving from his seat or putting his arms under the table. The *séance* lasted about forty minutes. I believe that the writing on the arm my father considered the most remarkable thing amongst many remarkable things that he saw during the time (which covered four or five years) he went about visiting different mediums.

Every one has read about or seen the Davenport brothers—how they were tied up and locked in a cabinet, how guitars, fiddles, and other instruments floated overhead, twanging their strings, or came gently into people’s hands or laps apparently of themselves. My father went to many of these *séances*, and also to that given by some Stock Exchange men, where Maskelyne and Cook under-

took to expose the Davenports. My father admired Messrs. Maskelyne and Cook's performances very much, but he declared that they were not like the Davenport brothers, nor did they in the least elucidate the mystery, nor, as far as I know, have the Davenports ever been exposed. My father and mother went to one performance given by the Davenports in the Hanover Square Rooms, of which I have often heard them speak. The celebrated Davenport cabinet was not deeper than the seat of a chair from back to front; a bench for people to sit upon was fixed in it. On this occasion the brothers, most wonderfully bound and tied up, were seated on the bench, flour in their hands and pieces of white paper under their feet, on which was drawn the outline of their shoes. Charles Reade, the author, sat between them with a hand on each of the brothers. They were all three locked in, the room was *not* dark, and immediately hands appeared and waved about from a hole in the door of the cabinet; my father seized one, and declared it to be a human hand, and said "it nearly broke his little finger," or he would not have let go. There was a great deal of noise in the cabinet, and in a few moments, when the doors were opened, there sat the Daven-

ports *unbound, without their coats, the flour still in their hands, their feet still within the pencil marks*, and Charles Reade in the same position, but looking most absurd, a guitar being balanced on his head. He declared he did not know how it came there, nor had he or the Davenports moved.

Dr. Edmunds, a gentleman well known for his advocacy of women doctors, nurses, &c. (it was he who first introduced Dr. Mary Walker to London), held many *séances* at his house, and Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall were great spiritualists. My father and mother attended several of these meetings. Sometimes, when the medium was a woman, the ladies searched her, but all to no purpose. Most of the manifestations were made public at the time in the different magazines devoted to such things. I heard the stories long afterwards, and there is only one other that I remember. My father started with being very sceptical, and he spent both time and money in trying to discover if there was any trick. Sometimes mediums made great mistakes in the things they told people, but they were oftener right than wrong, and many things they did were quite unaccountable. If my father came to any conclusion, I believe he thought it was a

kind of possession by evil spirits, like Elymas the sorcerer and the soothsaying damsel.

The other story I remember is of a Mrs. Marshall, a medium my father often went to see, both at her lodgings and at private houses. She lodged in a first floor in a house in Southampton Row. We at that time lived in Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, so were close by. One cold Sunday night, late in the autumn, my father went to see Mrs. Marshall. It was about nine o'clock. They are good old houses and have large rooms, but Mrs. Marshall's was barely furnished; she did not even have a carpet. There were about twenty people sitting round a large round table, which was tipping, tilting, and rapping in an amazing manner. My father stood near the door and looked at the people. They were all much excited, some murmuring and groaning, others looking as if they would faint. One old gentleman appeared to be about to have an epileptic fit; another person, a woman, was on the verge of hysterics. Whilst he was looking the table was making towards him, the people pushing back or dragging forward their chairs with their disengaged hand (only one being on the table), and the medium was beckoning him to join them, looking very hot, and as if the spirits

were beyond her control. At last the table rapped out, with the aid of the alphabet, "Let the scribe come in." And my father took a seat by the old gentleman. Laying his hand on his heart, he found it beating furiously, so he advised him in a low voice to "leave off or he would have a fit." The old man took no notice, and the table went on tilting so much that the people had to stand up to keep their hands on it. The medium said there was "an antagonistic influence in the room, that the spirits were angry." A lady went off into hysterics, a young man began to pray aloud, others beat their breasts and groaned "Lord have mercy upon us!" "Amen! Amen!" cried others, and the old gentleman fell back in his chair and began to foam at the mouth. My father laid his hand on the table and mentally adjured the spirits to depart in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (he did not speak a word), and the manifestations almost instantly stopped. Mrs. Marshall was very angry, and began to soundly rate him, but he told her to bring some water and help him attend to the old gentleman, saying that it would be awkward for her if he died. She did this, sulkily enough, and they were some time getting him round.

My father said, in speaking of it afterwards,

he "never saw such a scene; it was a regular witches' Sabbath."

In 1866 spiritualism was still attracting much attention, and had more enthusiastic followers than in 1862. Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall were firm believers, and Home, a well-known medium, held frequent *séances* at their house, to which the following letters refer:—

"15 ASHLEY PLACE,
"VICTORIA STREET, S.W., May 8.

"I have not published any account of 'The Coal of Fire,' except in a letter I wrote to the *Spiritual Magazine*.

"I cannot at the moment lay my hand on the number. The statement amounted to this—

"That in the presence of ten persons Daniel Home left the table round which we were sitting, went to the fire, and took thence a large living coal—*red heat to eye and touch*—came and placed it on my head, ruffling the hair about it. *Not a hair was singed*. He subsequently took it from my head and placed it successively in the hands of three persons; it did them no harm. When it was on the hand of the third I put my finger on it, and it burnt my finger. Preparation of any kind was simply impossible.

"Nor was it possible that ten persons could have fancied they saw what they did not see—but that it was merely a delusion.

"But this singular phenomenon is a trifle compared with others I have lately seen.—Truly yours,

"S. C. HALL."

I can find no record of the year in which the foregoing letter was written. Mr. S. C. Hall has only dated it May 8. The following letter is not an answer to it, but was written to Mrs. S. C. Hall some time after.

“74 GREAT RUSSELL STREET,
“BLOOMSBURY SQUARE, W.C., Nov. 5, 1866.

“DEAR MADAM,—I am very ill and ordered to be quiet, but there is a text I have just tumbled over in the original which is so important that I send it you: “Luke xxiv. 39, ‘Handle me, see my hands and my feet, that I am He, *for a spirit hath not both flesh and bones as ye see I have.*’—‘ὅτι πνεῦμα σάρκα καὶ ὀστέα οὐκ ἔχει.’ Or as the Vulgate has it, ‘Quia spiritus carnem et ossa non habet, sicut me videtis habere.’ The first version is mine, and is only a little more emphatic than our own, which you will see; but in any version the argument is the same.

“Now I have heard spiritualists and Mr. Hall and yourself say that they have seen and felt spirit-hands; that they have a warm and soft pressure. My own hands pressing a spiritualist’s have been mistaken for them—*ergo*, spirits have flesh and bones.

“Therefore, the Saviour must have spoken falsely immediately after His Resurrection, or the whole spiritualism of modern times must, as it depends upon such evidence, be an imaginative fiction.

“Knowing you to be earnest in the search of truth, I may be excused for this intrusion.

“With much regard and respect to Mr. Hall and yourself, in which Mrs. Friswell joins.—I am, dear Madam, most truly yours,
J. HAIN FRISWELL.”

CHAPTER VII

New editions of "Sham" and "Out and About"—A short explanation of the lawsuit—To Brighton with three boys—A letter to a friend—Some inventions—A business-like woman—A little album verse—Lines to a tobacco jar in the form of a marquise—A sorrowful story.

IN 1862 a new edition of "Sham" and of "Out and About" was published. Of the latter a reviewer says: "It has gone through a sufficient number of editions to justify the universal praise it met with on its first appearance."

In this year my father was writing "A Daughter of Eve," which he intended for a one-volume story; but in those days three volumes were the fashion, the one-volume novel being almost unknown. Mr. Bentley wished my father to lengthen "A Daughter of Eve," which he did; but he always considered it spoilt the story, and there was no doubt this was so. The plot is most dramatic, and had the story been left its original length, it would have been both strong and artistic. My father often thought of dramatising it, and even talked to Mr. Henry Irving,

who liked the character of the Comte de la Biche, but my father's health was too bad then for him to undertake more than his ordinary work. The book first appeared in 1863, and in spite of its being a book of patchwork, as one reviewer called it, though he adds "it is not a term of disparagement," it was very successful. It was dedicated to the late Sir Richard Burton.

In 1863 my father gave up engraving, for he writes in his diary :—

"I commence this year having embarked in literature, and, on the whole, not unsuccessfully, provided I am content to work unnoticed and unknown. At the same time, my faith in man constantly decreases my faith upwards also; I am much less happy and more constantly depressed. I find almost all men utterly selfish, very dead to noble influences or generous sacrifices. Perhaps this is the usual fate of over-sanguine and incautious men. If so, I can only pity them, and their sorrow adds to mine. *Data fata segnior.*"

Here follows a list of debts which come to £628, and were the result of the lawsuit.

This Chancery suit is so frequently mentioned, and was so great a burden upon my father, that though it is purely a family matter, I feel I ought to give some slight explanation. Briefly the matter was this. My great-grandmother had lent a con-

siderable sum of money to an Irish peer, and after some years his affairs were found to be very much embarrassed. His creditors came down on the estate, and my grandfather put in a claim for the debt. Through some legal mistake or quibble it was found the amount could be disputed; though they could not repudiate the debt altogether, they wished to get out of paying interest, the latter not having been paid for many years. My grandfather went to law, and my father, as his heir, carried on the suit.

In reference to the £628 my father continues:—

“As this is in addition to a previous loss of £300 out of small earnings and £10,000 left us, I think I may claim to be somewhat unfortunate. I have been industrious, and so far frugal that, had I been justly treated, I should now have been rich.”

Throughout the whole of 1863 he wrote “The Echoes of the Week” for *The Illustrated London News*, and some articles for *The Saturday Review* and *London Review*; and he was preparing a book of essays on the formation of character, to be called “The Gentle Life.”

In September he took my mother and brothers and Demetrius Ghica to Brighton, where they had

some difficulty in getting lodgings, the landladies looking askance at three boys. The following letter was written to a young man who was an intimate friend:—

“BRIGHTON, *Sept.* 6, 1863.

“DEAR IZARD,—I was in my affliction reading Clarke’s ‘Scripture Promises,’ as a consolation, after being shut up for a wet day with Dick and Demetri,¹ when your letter came just as I had read this—Prov. xxvii. 17, ‘Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.’ ‘Sir,’ as said Dr. Johnson, ‘your letter did me good, sir. When a man is dull, sir, with the elementary obfustications which ordinarily accumulate at marine residences, nothing is so calculated to create hilarity and banish gloom as the epistolary correspondence of a friend. Sir, a man shut up with boys is in an unnatural situation. He overruns with black bile, which the Greeks called *Melancholia*. The marine residence may be pleasant, but the company of boys is depressing.’ But after your letter it was ‘no more pills or any other medicine.’

“Take Izard’s *Revalentia Brightonica*; one trial will prove the fact; sold in bottles, so that the volatile essence may not escape. The weather, yesterday excepted, has been very beautiful, and we have found one or two friends down here: Henri Drayton, who gave us tickets for his entertainment, Jeffs, John Leech, Mark Lemon, and Walter Lacy, who stood sherry and seltzer. Here also is

¹ Prince Ghica’s son, who was at school at Wellington College, and was spending his holidays with us. Prince Ghica was afterwards Roumanian Minister to the Court of St. James’s.

old John Mortimer of Stow, and he has invited us, and his wife is charmed with Harry. With the Mortimers we had a trip to Newhaven and then back to Lewes. At Newhaven we saw artillery practice with Armstrong guns; at Lewes we went to the Castle, and dined at the Star inn, and saw the prisons and torture-chambers of the many martyrs who were burned in Queen Mary's time.

"Bloody Mary! not a bad name.

"We have two ghosts down here, one in a drama called the 'Dead Guest,' written by Phillips of the Adelphi. I am right sorry that you have not come down, but am consoled by the news of Mrs. Rumley and Dawson. I shall come up on Monday, and, if I can, call in Lombard Street. I had two articles in *The London Review* this week; rather lucky, eh?

"I have had to fall back on some old books for reading here, and have been regularly through *The Times*, as well as one or two other papers. Your account of the club pleases me. . . . I am glad Montgomery came up; our club, sir, is evidently getting talked about.

"Give my best regards to all, and look to *Punch* for Leech's sketches of a Brighton crinoline.—Ever yours most truly."

In this year he wrote some articles on the dwellings of the poor, and for this purpose he visited many of the model lodging houses; he tried also to get seats in shops for the shop-girls, but the British public is difficult to move to any reform, and those who buy seldom think of those who stand and wait.

It was in the sixties that Evans's supper-rooms were highly popular. Thackeray speaks of them and of Herr von Joel, who was one of the artists, and nightly amused the company by his wonderful whistling and his imitation of the songs of birds. My father had not heard him in his prime, but he was one of the few who knew that the old man, who wandered about the room selling cigars, had been a celebrity of a kind in his day. One day, in passing through Covent Garden, he saw him sitting under the piazza, on a wooden chair, in the sun. He looked very feeble, almost corpse-like, but when my father crossed and spoke to him he found him in a terrible state of excitement. Sure of a sympathetic listener, he commenced:—

“Ach! those too ter-rible peoples, that dreadful woman. Vat you think they do? Ach! it is *awful*. I fall asleep. I sleep so sound, for a long, long time. I wake—something against my leg wake me; it was icy cold. I ope mine eyes, and der vas dat man in black, what-you-call-him, de-de-under-undertaker—he vas measuring me for mine coffin. Ach! ach! I vill go home no more. I get up at vonce, I dress, I take a chair—I vill go home no more. Ach! it vos too ter-rible.”

My father tried to calm him, but the poor man was fully persuaded his relatives were tired of him and anxious for his death. No doubt he

had fallen into a lethargy so deep that the watchers thought the great change had come; but my father considered this a horrible instance of the inhuman way in which the old and infirm are too often treated in some classes. Such haste is not perhaps often shown, but discussions sometimes take place during the assumed unconsciousness of the dying which they hear and understand, and which had better be left till death is beyond dispute.

My father, had he learnt drawing, would have made a good artist. I have already said he designed several book-covers, and he was fond of illustrating the letters, or more often the envelopes, he sent to his friends. When he left London and settled at Fair-Home, Bexley Heath, he amused himself by drawing all kinds of quaint figures, illustrating arts and crafts; these he had burnt on glass and put into a window.

When he was with Messrs. Hunt & Roskell he designed a folding stud, which they made in gold, and which is now copied and has been sold in the streets for many years at a penny. For a prize at a rifle competition he designed a silver cup, the shape somewhat altered from, but suggested by, a Minie bullet pointed downwards,

resting on three stacked rifles. It was first made by Messrs. Hunt & Roskell, and has been, and is still, very popular, having been copied by nearly all the silversmiths in London. I have seen it standing on four or five muskets, and in many sizes, and it is still to be seen at all the rifle meetings where prizes are given. Every one adopted his wine-glasses—for he first designed the thin, plain glass shaped like an egg, with the thin, plain stem (straw stem I believe it is called). They were first made for him from his design by Phillips & Co., of Bond Street. Then there is a most elegant claret jug and many other things, both pretty and useful, for which he never received any monetary advantage, as he neither patented nor registered them. This was, of course, very unbusiness-like, but people were not so commercially inclined in those days as in these. Now we should never think of throwing away a chance of turning an honest penny.

My father was that wonderful person, a good listener as well as talker, though it is said the two seldom go together. I have known him sit and listen for a whole evening to a well-known actor, now dead, who used to come and talk of

his triumphs and his managerial worries, but who never thought to ask my father how his books were going, or to mention that he had read such and such a notice of the complimentary kind. I can remember a volatile little lady who talked of nothing but her own books, and an older lady who did the same; also a young editor who was going to do wonders with his magazine, and could speak of nothing else. My father listened and gave him advice in the gentlest manner. Many a novel has he read, and many a literary aspirant has obtained advice and an introduction to a publisher; but there was no Authors' Society then to look after the interests of writers, or to help young beginners along the thorny path of literature.

In the sixties and seventies people had more leisure; there was time to write an autograph letter or a verse for an album. Now we type our letters, and shall soon use a stamp for our names on everything but cheques and legal documents.

There were no type-writing machines in my father's lifetime, and he fancied people meant to compliment him when they wished for his autograph, and would go out of his way to gratify them. He was rather amused at the fuss people

made over such small matters, and was not a little disgusted at what he considered the commercial spirit of the age. I remember his coming home one evening and telling my mother the following story about the wife of a well-known illustrator :—

“I heard that — was ill, so I called there; found he had a cold, but was much better. He was up and in the drawing-room; there were several people there. I had a long conversation with Mrs. — about her husband's work; said how much I admired it, and so on. We were standing near a cabinet. Suddenly she pulled open a long, deep drawer. ‘Look!’ she said, ‘these are all his sketches, *every single one he has ever done*; would you like to look over them?’ I said I should be delighted; so we looked at several. Many were mere scraps, others very rough, and drawn on any odds and ends of paper. I asked her if she would give me one of these. ‘I cannot,’ she replied; ‘I never give *one* away or let him. If anything happens that he can't draw, or if he were to die, I shall sell them;’ and she added, as she shut and locked the drawer, taking out the key, ‘*this is property*, you know.’”

No doubt this *very* business-like lady would have felt offended if my father had refused her an autograph or a verse for her album, for it is a peculiarity of “business-like people” that they resent that quality in others. But my father was very good-natured over such requests, and would write something in a few moments, and without

that air of doing-an-inferior-being-an-overwhelming-favour that many literary people affect. I quote two small pieces he wrote in albums:—

ADVICE TO A YOUNG MAIDEN.

“ ‘ *Be good*, sweet maid, and let who can be clever,’
 So wrote my great friend Kingsley years ago.
 Ay! *here’s ago* to follow it for ever,
 Folk will do worse though they the better know.
Do noble things, not dream them all day long,
 And so make life, death, and that vast forever
 One glad, sweet song!

Thus ends the precept: I can say no better,
 So just like Cap’en Cuttle make a note.
 Leave out the lines I’ve writ, ay, every letter,
 But Kingsley’s sweet, short sermon get by rote,
 And at life’s end rejoice you’ve done no worse
 Than following out this little album verse.”

TO A TOBACCO JAR IN THE SHAPE OF A MARQUISE.

“ Ah! *Bonheur de ma vie*—thou fragile form,
 With thy perpetual bow and shameless smile,
 Stooping to man—if after life’s dull storm,
 False friendship’s sunshine, woman’s snareful wile,
 I now take refuge in my elbow chair,
 Books, leisure, meditation, and a pipe,
 High thoughts of noble concourse doubly dear,
 Forswearing worldly gains, rotten ere ripe;
 Happy am I descending Life’s rough hill,
 To find in woman’s form some consolation still.”

In the winter of 1861 garrotting was fast assuming the importance with which it afterwards startled the public. One night early in that year a young industrious tradesman was passing on his way home up Holborn Hill. He was nattily dressed, as a well-to-do man should be. As he walked rapidly along, a man and woman just on the rise of the hill made at him, and he, seeing their intention, quickly dodged them, and tried to seize the woman. He would have succeeded in this, but suddenly the man struck at him with a sharp penknife, and the keen blade entered the pupil of his left eye. He never forgot the long thin fingers and the sharp blade, but bore the dreadful recollection to his grave. He fell in an agony of pain, his assailants fled, and a policeman picked him up and took him to St. Bartholomew's Hospital; there he remained six weeks, and after being sent out for a few days to recruit his strength, an operation was performed, and the eye was removed by Mr. Paget. Then he was discharged, and, although aided by his customers, he failed to re-establish a business—that of scale-making, which requires extreme delicacy. From sympathy the other eye went, and this produced a total blindness, which a painful operation per-

formed at Charing Cross Hospital failed to cure. From comfort he fell to indigence, and three years afterwards he was found by a member of a charitable society in extreme distress. My father was told of the case, and went to see Alfred Gunn—for that was the poor scale-maker's name. He found him and his young wife and infant child in a miserable garret. "A pitiable sight he was, pale, sickly, and in rags, without a coat, as he sat glaring at his visitor with one sightless eye."

His wife was an industrious needlewoman, and had kept a roof over their heads; but they were almost starving when Mr. Izard found them and told my father, who thought an appeal to the public, "whose hearts are always open to charity," would not be in vain.

A letter was written by him to *The Morning Star*, a now defunct daily paper, then edited by Justin McCarthy, and the public responded generously.

The Prince of Wales was one of the first to send a donation. I have General Knollys' letter before me, in which he says he is commanded by the Prince to send — for the use of Alfred Gunn, "whose sad case was this morning brought

under the notice of his Royal Highness." From the Prince to dustmen, who collected their beer-money and sent it by a deputation, who called on my father—from members of Parliament, who sent their guineas, to work-girls, who saved their pence—upwards of £280 was collected.

The money was invested in a shop at Berkhamstead, and the Gunns began a new career, which for a time was successful. Mrs. Gunn did her best, but she was not a very energetic or business-like woman, and, though she had a small servant, to manage a house, a business, and make a lodger comfortable is not an easy task, and would try a clever woman. Then her poor husband failed to recover the shock to his nervous system: perhaps he was never a very strong man; be that as it may, he fell into ill-health, and was finally admitted into the Consumption Hospital at Hampstead. The business was sold, and his wife and children went to live near him. A relative of the Gunns took the eldest child, and as her husband grew worse, Mrs. Gunn was admitted to the hospital as nurse or helper to the nurses. My father and Mr. Izard went sometimes to see the poor invalid, and finally he died. His wife was left, and survived him

many years. It is a very sorrowful story, for they were young and comparatively prosperous people when the assault occurred.

Another sad case that took place at the end of the year was the illness of a clever artist who had been out in the Crimea. A subscription was got up for him by the Urban Club, and he was presented with several hundred pounds, which enabled his last days to be passed in comparative comfort. I have mentioned this because it called forth many letters from well-known men, only one of which I shall quote:—

“Dec. 19, 1863.

“Having business yesterday in the ‘Rolls Court,’ Chancery Lane (a *long lane*, in which some people can find *no turning*), I fully intended to call upon you on my return home, but the ‘Rolls’ having rolled me off in another direction, I enclose a cheque for — towards the subscription, and with best wishes and compliments of the approaching season, remain, yours very truly,

“GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.”

My father's last entry in his diary for 1863 is: “W. M. Thackeray dies.” Alas!

CHAPTER VIII

The Shakespeare Committee—Life Portraits of Shakespeare—
Letters about the “Portraits”—At Stratford-on-Avon—
Familiar Words—*The Athenæum* and “Familiar Words”
—The critic criticised—The corrector corrected—Letters
from Dr. Ingleby, Samuel Timmins, and John Timbs—
Mrs. S. C. Hall and Mrs. Moore’s testimony.

IN the physical world there are certain vast objects and agencies of which people are bound to think and speak more than of others—the sea, the wind, the Pyramids, the largest waterfall, the highest mountain, or the most beautiful cathedral. So it is with objects of the moral or historical world. Could any English person exist forty-eight hours without thinking of the State, Liberty, the Working classes, the Established Church, Gladstone, the Battle of Waterloo, or William Shakespeare? “Our Immortal Bard,” like the poor, is always with us; we can never forget him, nor do we wish to, unless we are poets, and then, if we always thought of Shakespeare, we should cease to be poets; for the great bard seems to have thought of everything, said everything, and written about

it better than we can. Goethe used to thank his stars he was a German, for had he been an Englishman, he would have felt himself crushed by the knowledge of such a predecessor as Shakespeare. But we are justly proud of him, and every now and then we have an extra bad attack of Shakespeare, when we quote him, argue about him, and quarrel over him. At the end of 1863 such an epidemic occurred, for would not the 23rd of April 1864 be the three-hundredth anniversary of his birth, and in no prominent place in all England was there a memorial of him. To remedy this a Committee was formed, and several meetings took place at the Urban Club; but the Committee grew till it numbered over four hundred distinguished persons, drawn from the most opposite sides of the social scale—archbishops and actors, judges and journalists, Dissenting ministers and High Churchmen. The very existence of such a Committee was a proof of a spirit of toleration not often seen, though such a large body must necessarily have differences of opinion, and in a community where every man is a leader, a writer, or a preacher, with a claim to be heard, a conflict of ideas is inevitable. The Shakespeare Committee was no exception to the rule, and the

suggestions for the monument and the site were many, and almost ludicrous. One wanted a statue, another a theatre, where only Shakespeare's plays should be performed, on the plan of the Molière representations at the Théâtre Français; then an obelisk, a Tudor chapel, a column, a Gothic cross, a cathedral, an avenue, and an almshouse were all suggested; while the Temple Gardens, Primrose Hill, Westminster, Stratford-on-Avon, and Kensington Gardens, were proposed as sites.

Amongst the Committee were the Archbishops of Canterbury, York, and Dublin, the Dukes of Devonshire and Manchester, Earls Granville, Clarendon, and Carlisle, Lord Brougham, Sir F. Pollock, Sir Roundell Palmer (afterwards Lord Selborne), the Lord Mayors of London and Dublin, the Presidents of the Royal Society of Antiquaries, Royal Academy of Arts, and the Royal Institution of British Architects, Sir E. B. Lytton, Sir R. C. Kirby, Messrs. Bellew, Bayle Bernard, E. L. Banks, Charles Dickens, Hepworth Dixon, J. H. Foley, Hain Friswell, Charles Reade, &c.

Of course the members of the Committee disagreed, and Hepworth Dixon seems to have been the disturbing element; for I have a caricature of him before me, where he is represented as Jove.

He has a halo round his head, and is holding in one hand a small statue of Shakespeare. A fat pig sits at his side, round whose neck is a collar with "Bacon" inscribed on it; at his other side is a bust of Mr. Cordy Jefferson, who is looking at Jove with adoring admiration. Underneath the picture is written: "Proposed design for the National Shakespeare Memorial, suggested by two well-known members of the London Committee. From the original model in brass. Ha'porth Dixon and Toady Jephson, joint designers."

My father had nothing to do with this cartoon, nor with that in *Punch*, where the editor of *The Athenæum* is represented scribbling on the Shakespeare statue. What my father did was to bring out a book called "Life Portraits of Shakespeare," a history of the various representations of the poet, with an examination into their authenticity.

"Life Portraits" was published by Sampson Low, Son, & Marston. It sold at a guinea, being illustrated with photographs of the principal portraits, besides views of the poet's birthplace and his last home. This book was dedicated to the Shakespeare Committee, my father being one of the most anxious to raise a memorial to the immortal bard. The announcement of the book

called forth letters from several well-known men, from two of which I take extracts; the first is from Mr. John Timbs, in which he says:—

“UPPER GEORGE STREET,
“BRYANSTON SQUARE, *Dec.* 10, 1863.

“Mr. Rolls, the Proctor, who had the portrait of Shakespeare, told me he intended to present it to the Russell Institution. I went there this morning, but the only picture there is Haydon’s ‘Xenophon,’ so I suppose he changed his mind. He told me [and very often] he obtained the picture from a room of St. Saviour’s Church, wherein Shakespeare’s brother Edward was buried.

“This, I fear, is too slight to print, especially as there is no time to hunt up the picture. . . . But our friend Mr. Heraud knows Mr. Rolls, and all about the Shakespeare portrait. I should like to be of service to you in this matter.”

The next is from Samuel Timmins:—

“ELVETHAM LODGE,
“BIRMINGHAM, *Nov.* 26, 1863.

“As I am greatly interested in all relative to Shakespeare, and am looking forward with pleasure to your forthcoming work, I take the liberty of enclosing you a slip I contributed to *The Daily Post*.

“I have ordered a copy of your book; as soon as received I shall give it an early notice in the columns of *The Daily Post*.

“You are of course acquainted with Wivell’s work and the full history of the portrait at Stratford, as I took special

interest at the time of its recovery, and wrote several papers concerning it. I might perhaps be able to send you some duplicates if required.

“I need only add that I fully investigated all the circumstances connected with the discovery of the Hunt¹ portrait, and am perfectly satisfied as to the *bond fides* of all concerning it, whatever the age and value of the portrait may be.”

My father was further assisted in his researches by the following gentlemen: Professor Owen; Duffus Hardy, Assistant Keeper of the Records; Thomas Challis, George Scharf, F.S.A., Secretary of the National Portrait Gallery; William Oakes Hunt, of Stratford-on-Avon; and the Committee of the Garrick Club, G. W. W. Firth of Norwich, J. O. Halliwell, and Mr. Charles Wright, “who had been unremitting in his kindness.”

One of the reviews speaks of the book as follows:—

“It is one of the noteworthy characteristics of this work that the reader rises from its perusal not bewildered with the memory of a series of conflicting claims, but with a fuller, a more vivid and satisfactory appreciation of what manner of man Shakespeare was. The author has arranged his material like a skilful painter, so that the most important objects on his canvas shall arrest the attention, while accessories of minor importance, but still interesting, are

¹ My father never believed in the authenticity of the Hunt portrait.

introduced with a masterly power of subordination to complete the composition. The work possesses a vitality and interest akin to that of a biography of the man. Mr. Friswell does not write like an advocate or a partisan, but with an acute and scholarly impartiality, free from bias, but not dispassionate, with a tender reverence and earnest, loving appreciation of his subject."

At this time everybody seemed to have something to say about Shakespeare. In a letter from Mr. G. Linnæus Banks, husband of the talented authoress of "God's Providence House" and many more clever novels, we see the British workmen forming their own committees. It was a pity so national a movement should have come to nothing, through the vanity and self-seeking of one or two men who ought to have had more sense.

The following is the letter referred to :—

" 33 CLOUDESLEY SQUARE, N.,
" *August 23, 1864.*

"The British Workmen's Shakespeare Committee propose to hold a semi-public meeting at the Whittington Club on Wednesday, September 14, or some other day thereabouts, for the purpose of bringing their movement before the Metropolis. It is intended to have three resolutions moved and seconded by working men; but it is also thought desirable to have each resolution supported by a separate member of the honorary council, and your name

has been unanimously pitched upon as one of the three. Can you, and will you, endeavour to do what they require? —Yours faithfully ever,

“G. LINNÆUS BANKS.”

In April my father went to stay with Mr. Flower, the Mayor of Stratford-on-Avon, and he writes from there to my mother :—

“THE HILL, STRATFORD-ON-AVON,
“*Sunday, April 17, 1864.*”

“I arrived here quite safely, having travelled first class, curiously with Tom Taylor and Vernon Harcourt, of *The Saturday Review*. These are great swells, and talked about all the lords, especially Derby, Russell, and Palmerston; but what interested me was a lot of anecdotes I got out of them about Carlyle and Tennyson. I fell in with Mr. Sams, who was also going to the Mayor’s, and the carriage brought us both here.

“The Mayor is a fine, noble old chap, but rather overworked and pestered. The house is charming—azaleas four feet high covered with a pyramid of bloom, excellent pictures, grapery, gardens, terrace, &c.; with less pretence, it is prettier than Mortimer’s. I was awake at four this morning, and heard the thrushes and blackbirds piping on the lawn, and thought of you, and wished so you were with me or in my place to have enjoyed it.

“The Mayor’s mother died the day we came down, aged eighty-six, and Mrs. Flower has gone to keep the old lady’s house; so we are three men here—melancholy and lonely. I am going to church and will pray for you. God bless you. —Ever yours affectionately.”

On the 24th of April he was at Leamington, and writes as follows:—

“16 GRAND PARADE, LEAMINGTON.

“Here I am at Mr. Robinson’s, who met us at Stratford, where I met several press men, and delighted Creswick’s heart by being there. The banquet you will read about. Lord Carlisle was in the chair, but all declared that Creswick’s speech was *the* speech of the evening. Just at the climax he forgot himself, and, being interrupted by a tremendous burst of applause, he made an anti-climax. The Archbishop of Dublin, Lord Leigh, Lord Houghton, and lots of others were there. Stratford was very gay; the first day at least is a success. We met Robinson and others, and after the feast rowed on the Avon, and wished, like good husbands, for our wives to enjoy the scenery and the beautiful weather. To-day I have been to Kenilworth, driving; and last night we drove past Warwick Castle. I find I am an authority here—people want to see me about the portraits. Williams has brought me tickets for all the entertainments, and is very kind indeed; all seem to overwhelm me with politeness, so that I hardly know how to get along.

“Adieu, God bless you, my dear wife.

“*P.S.*—The lads are below drinking wine, but I am in my room finishing copy. I am quite tired of feasting, and long for our quiet little dinners.”

My father appears to have retired from the Shakespeare Committee before the final quarrel. He was not a man afraid to fight, but no doubt

he could see he could do nothing, and so retired, but not, I am sure, before he had given his opinion on the matter, and possibly spoken strongly on the behaviour of certain members. That he was not on the council, or rather had left it, the following extract from a letter of Mr. J. O. Halliwell's, asking my father to dinner, will show. It was written on the 25th of July, 1864 :—

“I cannot tell you how the squabbles of the Shakespeare Committee pained me. You are well out of being on the council; though you don't owe your escape to me, yours happening to have been the only name I particularly urged to be included.”

I have gone so much into details of the Shakespeare Committee because of what followed.

In 1863 my father had been busy upon two books besides the “Life Portraits of Shakespeare.” One was “The Gentle Life,” of which I will speak in another chapter; the other was “Familiar Words,” an index, verborum, or quotation handbook. Both these books came out in 1864, and were published by S. Low & Co. On January 28, 1865, there appeared in *The Athenæum* a violent attack on “Familiar Words.” The critic professed to find much ignorance and carelessness in the

work, and, as an instance, he pitched upon these lines from Moore :—

“ I give thee all—I can no more,
Though poor the offering be ;
My heart and lute are all the store
That I can bring to thee.”

They were said by the reviewer to be “part of the first page’s song in ‘Lodoiska,’ act iii., scene 1 ; the author, John Kemble” ! The title of the ballad is “My Heart and Lute,” and Thomas Moore is the author. They are to be found in Moore’s Works, complete edition, Longmans, 1844, p. 298, and in Moore’s Songs, “National Airs and Ballads,” Longmans, 1849, p. 142, and in the complete edition, 1862, also Longmans, p. 105. The very spiteful and ungenerous manner in which *The Athenæum* behaved made many of my father’s friends very indignant, and he had several letters on the subject ; here is one from Mrs. S. C. Hall, in which she encloses a slip from Mrs. Moore, the poet’s widow, who was still alive, and living at Sloperton Cottage :—

“ *February the 8th.*

“ Here is Mrs. Moore’s statement—in answer to my question. She is, as you may gather from the writing, weak and ill. I am glad of the confirmation. I have the

song in an old music-book, which I will lend you if you like—'words by Thomas Moore,' music by Henry Bishop. —Yours in great haste."

I have this letter before me now, and in it is enclosed a slip of yellow paper, on which is written by Mrs. Moore: "He did write the song, but do not, pray, make a stir about it—you know me, I love quiet." Dr. Ingleby writes:—

"ILFORD, Feb. 15, 1865.

"Though a stranger to you, yet my dear friend, Samuel Timmins, knows you, and he may serve to introduce me.

"I have read the scandalous notice in *The Athenæum*. I do not expect you will be harmed by it. But thinking you might contemplate still further making him eat the leek, and that possibly you have not seen Longmans' edition of Moore's Works, 1841, I think it but friendly to tell you that, despite *The Athenæum's* statement to the contrary, 'I give thee all—I can,' &c., *is* in this edition. A friend of mine has the edition, and sent me notice of the fact. *You may rely upon this statement.*"

The next letter is from a music publisher in New Bond Street. He writes:—

"Having been much interested in the discussion in *The Athenæum* respecting the song of Moore's, 'My Heart and Lute,' and possessing some information relative to it which

perhaps may be useful, I beg to forward it for your information.

“The song was originally published by Power, 34 Strand, about the year 1824 or 1825, and had a very great sale. After its publication, the late Sir Henry Bishop heard it, and claimed the melody as his, Moore having heard it some years before in a ballet entitled either ‘Caractacus’ or ‘Love in a Tub,’ and forgotten from whence it came. I am borne out in this by a footnote which appears on the first page of the music, where it is stated, ‘by permission of Messrs. Goulding & D’Almaine,’ Sir Henry Bishop’s publishers, which note did not appear in the first copies of the song. As regards John Kemble being the author, I can only say I possess the original libretto of ‘Lodoiska,’ bearing the date of its production—June 9, 1794. A song there is sung by the page in act iii., scene 1, ‘Sweet bird that cheer’st the heavy hours,’ and was then sung by Master Welsh. On referring to Sherwood & Jones’ edition, which was probably published about 1830, and formed one of a series entitled ‘The London Stage,’ and most likely copied from an acting edition, of a revival of the piece, which was produced, I rather think, as an Easter piece, at Drury Lane or Covent Garden, about 1825 or 1826. Moore’s words were there introduced, and probably sung by some popular vocalist of that time, who thought it more likely to please the popular taste. I possess the music of the opera, which confirms what appears in the libretto. I would add that John Kemble died in 1823, probably before ‘My Heart and Lute’ was written.

“You are quite welcome to use this information in any way you think proper, and you may see the libretto and

music here if you wish it—but I do not wish my name to appear.

“Trusting you will not think me intrusive in this matter.—I am, Sir, yours most obediently,

“———,
Music Publisher.”

“*To the Editor of ‘The Athenæum.’*”

“SIR,—At the risk of provoking another attack, allow me again to give a most distinct denial to the assertion of your reviewer that the lines ‘My Heart and Lute’ are not Moore’s, and that they are ‘*not* included in the edition of Moore’s Works published by Longmans in 1841, the only critical and authoritative edition of Moore; the works in that edition having been carefully collected and superintended by the poet himself. Their appearance in other editions, not edited by the poet, is no evidence at all. All sorts of things are attributed to all sorts of persons in popular editions.’

“You then, in royal scorn of ‘popular editions,’ quote Sherwood & Jones’ cheap rubbish, in which the song is allotted to J. P. Kemble! Truly, here is evidence indeed!—as one of our critics has said, ‘I should have as soon put it to Sir Isaac Newton.’ The public, after your reiterated assertion, will be astonished to find that the song, ‘My Heart and Lute,’ *is* in the edition collected and superintended by Moore himself in 1841—in vol. v., page 195; that it is in the index to the tenth volume, and correctly given; that in 1824 Sir H. R. Bishop published the song and music, with Moore’s name, and presented it to Moore; and that Moore constantly sang it, and claimed it, as well he might, as his own.

"2. In 1794, when Moore was fifteen, two songs from 'Lodoiska' by Kemble were published, one of which was set to music by Stephen Storace; but, so far as the Museum and other authorities attest, 'My Heart and Lute' was *never published as Kemble's*. The song is not in the first edition of 'Lodoiska,' and was merely imported into the opera, as many songs are, years after.

"3. In addition to this, I may add a paragraph from Messrs. Longmans' letter to me:—"We beg to inform you that Moore's ballad "My Heart and Lute" *is* included in ALL the editions of his works.'

"Will this evidence satisfy your critic? I have now given him four editions, including the one he cites; and I have the additional testimony of the poet's widow, who still lives at Sloperton Cottage. Surely the public will not need this. I have convicted your critic upon his own reference (the edition of 1841) of careless, cruel untruth; or, if it is not careless, then it is certainly more cruel and wicked.

"Let me add that the clerical errors in 'Familiar Words' are not mine. The *h* has dropped out of 'hair,' and made a ludicrous mistake; but of that and others I am innocent. My amanuensis had the books with marked passages set for him to copy; and I wonder that, all things considered, he and the printer have done so well. Those who know the labour of proof-reading will excuse the tired eye which passes over an error or so. The maxim is from Horace, and sound enough, to look over such small blemishes where merit is to be found. Let me, however, parallel your attack by a rich grammatical blunder, also from Moore, in *The Athenæum* of December 24 last:—

'I feel like *one* who treads alone, &c.,
And all but *me* departed.'

Such 'trifling' is perhaps not criticism, but it passes current for it now and then."

This letter from my father appeared in *The Queen* of February 11, 1865. The quotation from Moore is quoted by the reviewer in a critique of "The Celebrities of London and Paris." It shows that even an *Athenæum* critic is at the mercy of his printer, and like many of us is not exempt from faults of grammar.

The reviewer of "Familiar Words"—who, to quote his own words, "had turned over the book to find something to praise"—my father convicts of "seven blunders or untruths" out of the dozen assertions made in his three columns of the paper, and he asks "if a critic guilty of so many errors in so small a compass could not have afforded to be charitable to a book that contains above 9000 quotations in 400 pages, with 65 pages of double index." *The Athenæum*, to cover its own errors, discovered no less than five obvious printer's errors, which it charged upon the author as faults of knowledge. For instance, the reviewer says the author has spoilt a passage in "Hamlet" by letting *between* take the place of *betcem*—

"So loving to my mother
That he might not between the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly."

This called forth a letter from Dr. Ingleby as follows :—

“MERRAB VILLA,
“PENZANCE, *March 29, 1865.*

“I was much obliged by your sending me your ‘Critic Criticised.’¹

“Observing that he returns to the charge in yesterday’s *Athenæum*, I beg to call your attention to three out of many errors into which he has fallen.

“No. 1.—*Beteem* is not the reading of any old copy of ‘Hamlet.’ *Between* is the old text, and though that’s nonsense, *beteem* does not mend matters. At least, I never met with the word in the sense of *permit*! *Between* (though doubtless a misprint) is the reading of one of the early quartos.

“No. 2.—It is odd that in correcting you this critic falls into the same mistake—

‘And *living* (!) when she died.’

“No. 3.—In the ‘Taming of the Shrew’ is (if I remember right), ‘In truth, sir, study what you most affect’ (not *must*, which is nonsense). Whether this is your oversight or your critic’s mistake I cannot here determine.”

It will be seen from this letter that the error in “Hamlet,” *between* for *beteem*, is also in one of the early quartos. As to the lines from Hood’s poem “The Death-bed,” that was no doubt a

¹ A pamphlet issued by Sampson Low, Son, & Marston. It was reprinted from *The Examiner* of February 11, 1865, with additions and Opinions of the Press.

misprint (if it was incorrect), for in all the editions of "Familiar Words" that I have seen they are quoted correctly—

"We thought her dying when she slept,
And *sleeping* when she died."

But even then, in correcting one error, and that a printer's, *The Athenæum* falls into two mistakes; for it says, "Fancy poor Hood's *delicious* lines" (one might take exception to the critic's adjectives, for *delicious* is more applicable to a peach than a poem); it then quotes the *delicious* lines thus:—

"We thought her dying *while* she slept,
And *living* when she died."

In the "Taming of the Shrew" the *must* for *most* was no doubt due to the printer. That "Familiar Words" contained errors (mostly printer's) there is no doubt; it would have been amazing had it not been so; but, as *The Examiner* said, "great industry must have been used to pick out the misprints," and certainly that industry might well have been used for a better purpose.

CHAPTER IX

The Athenæum and "Familiar Words"—Mr. Moy Thomas states the case and defends the compiler—Letter on contemporary criticism by Professor Owen—"The Gentle Life"—"About in the World"—The Queen's edition of "The Gentle Life."

THE *Athenæum* complained of my father's letter of defence being published in *The Publishers' Circular*, and accused that journal of assisting in giving circulation to statements absurd and false, and suggested that "when admitting such a paper into their columns they were off their guard."

Mr. Moy Thomas, then editor of *The Publishers' Circular*, in a clear and concise manner defends my father, and states the whole case. The letter, he says,

"was not inserted until we had satisfied ourselves that injustice had been done to the writer, for which no sufficient reparation had been made. . . . Our contemporary, for instance, charged Mr. Friswell with spoiling a passage of Fielding by recklessly substituting the word 'candle' for 'flambeau.' Mr. Friswell showed the passage as it stands in his book is correct, and that it was the reviewer who was in error; but the reviewer neglects to retract the

charge. Our contemporary distinctly charges Mr. Friswell with 'omission' in having overlooked a line in Goldsmith and not quoted a line in Prior; and trusting, as we can only suppose, to the short memories of his readers, he ventured subsequently to maintain that his complaint was merely, that the passages referred to should have been placed together and indexed. Again, in the case of the alleged misquotation from Moore . . . When Mr. Friswell replied that the lines were to be found in Moore's Works, the editor, having had a full week to reconsider his charge, rejoined in the following passage:

"Mr. Friswell tries to defend one of his more serious errors, that of ascribing the page's song in "Lodoiska" to Tom Moore, and, for a man of his limited reading, the defence, though insufficient, is not a bad one. . . . Of course we know that the lines quoted are commonly thought to be Moore's, and that they have been printed in his works. But the truth seems to be, that although Moore used to sing the song, and probably arranged the music for it, the lines are not his. They are in Sherwood & Jones' edition of "Lodoiska" by J. P. Kemble; *and they are not included in the edition of Moore's Works published by Longmans, in ten volumes, 1841, the only critical and authoritative edition of Moore.*'

"To this Mr. Friswell answered by once more affirming the lines were by Moore, . . . the fact being that they were not only in the popular editions of Moore's Works, but actually in the very edition of 1841, in which the critic, with so many expressions of contempt for his opponent's 'limited reading' and ignorance of the value of editions, had emphatically declared that they were not to be found. We willingly concede that accuracy is the first quality in a compiler of a dictionary of quotations,

but, on the other hand, accuracy is still more essential in a critic in an influential journal. One who publishes a severe attack upon the labour of others ought indeed to 'speak by the card,' and if he has not done so in any particular, his apology ought to be distinct and complete; but even in this very simple case of the Moore quotation, our contemporary appears to us to have failed to comply with these conditions. He did indeed afterwards admit that he had discovered the lines referred to were by Moore, but Mr. Friswell justly complains that the admission was conveyed in a short, abrupt paragraph, hardly intelligible to any one not having the original charges before him, instead of being published with a heading in capitals, and in a conspicuous position of the paper, as the previous charges had been. . . . It was inserted without any sort of heading, in the midst of miscellaneous items of gossip, where it might easily be overlooked. Besides, the editor announced the fact of Moore's authorship as derived from 'a sure source,' as if it were merely a matter of opinion instead of being a matter of evidence. He neglected to state also that the passage in dispute was actually to be found in the edition of 1841; and he made no apology for his disparaging reflections on Mr. Friswell's 'limited reading' and lack of familiarity with the intricacies of literary history, and the relative value of editions which he had based upon this inexcusable blunder of his own."

The Examiner of 11th February 1865, in a long article, says of "Familiar Words":—

"This book, a work of patient literary labour, will add to the author's credit with all honest workers who are able to appreciate the trouble he has taken. . . . It is impossible

that the work of indexing¹—a vital part of the construction of such a volume—could have been more thoughtfully planned, or executed with a more conscientious sense of what was requisite to make the book thoroughly useful to its readers. . . . Of Mr. Friswell we know nothing but that, before the publication of this volume, he had written an account of the portraits of Shakespeare, and that he was one of the members of the Shakespeare Tercentenary Committee who publicly seceded from it. When this book of his appeared, *The Athenæum* of the 28th of January attacked it in an article, to which he replied last week with a temperate but firm letter, convicting his reviewer of misrepresentation upon clause after clause of his own ungenerous indictment. Such a letter it was dangerous for the impeached journal either to reject or insert. It was inserted in the following manner, muffled between comments that, by the defect they show of taste and knowledge, fill up the measure of the disgrace of the convicted critic.”

Then my father's letter is given, with the “comments.”

The publishers received many letters. The following is from “the conductor of perhaps our most popular periodical, himself an author of worth and standing, a gentleman associated intimately with the foremost writers of our day.” He says:—

“I have gone through ‘Familiar Words,’ and really must think that every one with any knowledge or taste for

¹ *The Athenæum* complained of the index.

English literature owes Mr. Friswell much gratitude for producing so valuable a book. The surface his research covers is so enormous, that it would indeed be marvellous if, in crossing and recrossing such a marge of quotations, he should not trip once or twice. Instead of pert insolence, the book ought to be received by every competent critic as an invitation to contribute to the excellence of succeeding editions."

The editor of *Notes and Queries* (the late Mr. W. J. Thoms), no mean authority, declares it to be the best book of the sort he has met with. *The Illustrated Times* says: "For my part, I think the manner in which *The Athenæum* has dealt with Mr. Friswell is downright dishonesty. . . . I think it *the best book of its kind in existence.*" *The London Review* notes that "the book is a most laborious one, and one that will most likely become a standard work of reference, the readings and research exhibited by the compiler being very extensive."

To cut a long list short, *The Daily News*, in a long review on "Familiar Words," only a few lines of which I quote, says:—

"This is a very clever and useful book, and ought to have a place on every study table by the side of Roget's 'Thesaurus.' . . . We accept Mr. Friswell's book with thanks; it will be of advantage in many ways, *and is worth the immense pains it must have cost.*"

The Morning Post, *The Morning Star*, *The City Press*, *The Illustrated London News*, and *The Queen* all bore their testimony to the worth of the book ; and there are several other papers which I have not named, from want of space. The controversy was sharp while it lasted.

Every one knows that it is not always wise to make a rejoinder when attacked, especially to a criticism. Your foe most likely has the command of a paper, while you have not. Then he may be untruthful, and in that case you are almost certain to get the worst of it. But in a case where facts are brought into question, it is as well to hit out and demolish your adversary if possible ; for if you are silent, many misunderstand it, and take the silence of contempt for the silence of defeat.

My father certainly demolished his critic, and had he been a generous critic he would have apologised in an open and straightforward manner. But in *The Publishers' Circular* an abler hand than mine has shown how it was done. Not only was my father's letter in small type, but intermingled with such comments as these :—

“The compiler of ‘Familiar Words’ seems desirous of drawing further attention to his unhappy book. With

that view, apparently, he has sent us a letter of 'unqualified denials,' which we should have charitably put in the fire but for his strenuous expression of a hope that we would give it space. As it is no business of ours to defend Mr. Friswell against himself, we yield to his prayer."

Here I give the letter to the editor which accompanied that which was to be printed, and which to my mind reads more like a command than a prayer :—

"Letter to Editor, 'Athenæum.'

"74 GREAT RUSSELL STREET,
"BLOOMSBURY SQUARE, *Feb. 7, 1864.*

"I enclose a letter which I must request you to print, by which I convict your journal of falsehood, either intended or careless.

"I leave it to your own judgment of what constitutes the behaviour of gentlemen to decide whether you owe me an apology or not for so malignant an attack. The letters I have received from those you reckon as your friends speak far more bitterly of it than I do.

"Of the printer's errors in my book I will only say that you must know that I was not guilty of them, and that kind friends have sent me up a list of specimens of what they call 'Manchester English' culled from the columns of *The Athenæum*, which by far exceed my errors. I am ashamed to find English criticism (?) reduced so low as to depend for point and spice on such childish matters."

Every one said that the attack on "Familiar Words" was made because my father was one of the members who publicly seceded from the Shakespeare Tercentenary Committee. But it is difficult to understand the ways of critics. Here is Professor Owen's opinion of criticism :—

"Nov. 3, 1865.

"My own experience makes me to know that modern—or, I would rather say, contemporary—criticism often does consist in making mistakes and attributing them to the subject, converting a conditional assertion of your subject into an absolute one, for the purpose of contradicting it, and in fact indulging in all the small roguery which a small rival or wounded contemporary finds it as easy as it is congenial to his nature to *run amuck* in. It only becomes serious when a journal *faute-de-mieux* is pretty widespread, and in the hands of such small rogue, and has the power to affect the sale of a genuine work so criticised.—Sincerely yours,

R. OWEN."

Sir Arthur Helps and many more well-known people wrote to my father on the subject, and the indignation seemed general.

While the controversy was being carried on over "Familiar Words," "The Gentle Life" was gaining nothing but praise from reviewers, and much popularity from the public. One critic asks, "Is it more difficult to lead the 'Gentle Life' than

to write about it?" and he goes on to say, "We do not know; but it is a subject in relation to which it is very easy to mystify the general reader."

Now, the second title of "The Gentle Life" is *Essays on the Formation of Character*, which explains the object of the book, so that the reader could not long be "mystified." The first essay is on "The difference between leading the Gentle Life and being Genteel," and my father quotes Thackeray's definition of a gentleman, which is "to be honest, to be gentle, to be generous, to be brave, to be wise, and, possessing all these qualities, to exercise them in the most graceful outward manner." Ought a gentleman to be a loyal son, a true husband, an honest father; ought his life to be decent, his bills to be paid, his tastes high, and his aims in life to be noble? asks Thackeray; and the author of "The Gentle Life" answers, "Yes, he should be all these, and somewhat more—these all men can be, and women too." What more they must be, the many readers of the volume can find out for themselves.

The book became very popular, upwards of 20,000 copies of the six shilling edition being sold in the first four years. This was a most unpre-

cedented success for a book of essays, especially in those days, when the reading public was not nearly so large as now. To my father the large sale was no pecuniary advantage, for, much against my mother's advice, he sold the copyright—not at first, but when the book was an assured success. Messrs. S. Low & Co. paid a small sum for it (£75). That they were anxious to have it, I have letters to show; no doubt they more fully realised its great success than its author did. I have often been asked for particulars of the total number sold of "The Gentle Life" series, but I have no means of ascertaining. I wrote to Mr. E. Marston last year on the subject. He kindly answered me to the effect that some books he had kept for "about forty years" had, "in the choppings and changes of this mortal life, disappeared," and "it is in these that the first arrangements with your father are recorded."

One does not want to know about "first arrangements," but as "The Gentle Life" sold for over thirty years, and was in its thirty-eighth edition in 1892, it would have been interesting to know how many went to an edition,¹ especially as I was informed by a well-known bookseller and

¹ I was told by an employé of the firm in 1892 that 5000 was an edition.

publisher that they regularly stocked the series by the thousand till a few years ago.

In the same year "About in the World" was published. It is a similar volume, its contents being perhaps more varied than "The Gentle Life." The publishers also purchased this copyright, they were so anxious to start a series.

Mr. Low, in one of his letters, in which he admits that "repeated propositions" came from them to buy the copyright of "The Gentle Life" (first series) and "About in the World," says he regards the books as *absolutely our own, to form a basis on which to work and push forward succeeding volumes*; but succeeding volumes, though they sold well, did not equal those first volumes, whose copyrights belonged to the firm. Who could expect that they would? The first volume sold, and still sells, almost like a spelling-book; it was translated into many languages, and was the means of advertising the publishing firm all over the British Empire.

The series comprised "The Gentle Life" (first and second series), "About in the World," "Like unto Christ," "Essays by Montaigne," "Varia," "The Silent Hour," "Essays on English Writers," "A Man's Thoughts," "Half-Length Portraits," and "The Better Self."

"The Gentle Life" was published anonymously at first, and the authorship was put down to many well-known people, one of them being A.K.H.B., a writer in *Fraser's Magazine*. Its anonymous appearance was the cause of an amusing remark.

A gentleman, who was somewhat of a male Mrs. Malaprop, said to my mother, "Why has Mr. Friswell published 'The Gentle Life' without his name?"

My mother replied, "He wishes for an unbiased opinion from the press."

"Ah!" said her questioner, "there is nothing like having a good *innuendo*."

Though the book was of scarcely any pecuniary advantage to its author, it brought him fame and many friends, amongst whom may be reckoned Earl Russell, M. Van de Weyer, then Belgian Minister in London; Canon Duckworth, at that time tutor to Prince Leopold; Richard Brinsley Sheridan, M.P.; the Hon. Mrs. Norton, and many others.

Her Majesty the Queen, who had read and admired the book, allowed an edition (in 1870) to be dedicated to her. This was a most gracious and unprecedented act, for we were told it was not usual for a monarch to accept the dedication of a

book that had been out, and the "Gentle Life" had been before the public for six years.

My father was greatly honoured and pleased, so were his publishers. Mr. Low, junior, said, in a letter, he should like to please Her Majesty the Queen "by *an instantaneous* appearance of the express edition of 'The Gentle Life,' but we will all put our shoulders to the wheel and produce an *edition de luxe*." This was done, for they kindly merged their volume into the new edition, and the best essays were taken from the two volumes, and a handsome book was produced and dedicated as follows :—

THIS SPECIAL EDITION
OF
THE GENTLE LIFE
IS, BY HER MAJESTY'S PERMISSION AND DESIRE,

Dedicated

TO ONE WHO, IN HER DAILY DUTIES,
HER TRIALS, AND HER SORROWS,
HAS ILLUSTRATED THE LESSONS WHICH
THE AUTHOR SEEKS, IMPERFECTLY,
TO INCULCATE.

TO

VICTORIA THE QUEEN.

My father sketched a small medallion for the title-page ; it represented Psyche with a butterfly on her hand. This was sent to Sir Noel Paton, who

complimented my father on his sketch ; he liked it so much he made a charming little drawing, which he said he “ would not have undertaken for any one else.” The medallion was beautifully engraved by the late C. H. Jeens, one of our finest modern engravers, and placed on the title-page. A copy handsomely bound in royal purple, and bearing the crown, was sent to Her Majesty ; the following letter came in reply :—

“ OSBORNE, *August 8, 1870.*

“ SIR,—I have been commanded by the Queen to thank you for the copy of your work you have presented to Her Majesty, and to add that the Queen was very much pleased with the book as far as she had had time to read it, *especially with the chapter on ‘Servants within our Gates,’* the advice in which, Her Majesty wishes would be followed by all.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

“ HENRY H. PONSONBY.”

CHAPTER X

The first attack of congestion of the lungs—A book of poems—Westland Marston's criticisms—Rev. J. M. Bellew asks for a poem to read in public—My father and his schoolfellows—An old garden—My father's kindness to children—The distracted author and the fiend boys.

IN the years from 1864 to 1866 my father was very busy, his earnings averaging £800 a year. In the first mentioned he published three books—"The Gentle Life," "About in the World," and "Familiar Words." Besides his articles in *The Family Herald*, he wrote for *Temple Bar*, *The Saturday Review*, *The Illustrated London News*, and some leaders for *The City Press*. He was "The Censor" of *The Morning Star*, and "Jaques" in *The Evening Star*, besides contributing Window sketches, poems, &c., to a magazine belonging to Mr. Maxwell.

From his youth he had always taken cold easily, and in August 1864 he had his first attack of congestion of the lungs. He was taken ill at night. There is an entry in his diary of August 29—"Lungs bleeding; call in doctor." And again, on

the 31st—"Send in 'Echoes'¹ from bed." Many a time in after years have I seen him propped up in bed, writing his articles on a small drawing-board, resting against pillows. On this first occasion he was not long in bed. His recuperative power was very great, and, unlike most men, he was never alarmed or melancholy over his illness; this courage and hopefulness helped him to live. But his cheerful, happy temperament cuts both ways; for if it helped him to bear his troubles and ill-health with cheerfulness and patience, so that outsiders seldom or never realised how ill he really was, it also induced him to do more than he was able. He was up and about at the earliest opportunity; and in 1864, after this first attack, which was not dangerous, he was at St. Albans in less than a fortnight—had driven down himself in his park phaeton, which he used to drive about town.

In 1865 he published a novel, "A Splendid Fortune." It came out in January, and at the same time *The Day of Rest* was advertised. It was a magazine for Sunday reading, and he brought it out in conjunction with Mr. Maxwell. My father was also preparing at this time a trans-

¹ Article in *The Illustrated London News*.

lation of "De Imitatione Christi," ascribed to Thomas à Kempis, and known as "The Imitation of Christ"—a literal, but not a happy, translation of the title. My father, who, people said, had a genius for titles, called his translation "Like unto Christ."

This book, we heard, became a great favourite with Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales during the illness of the Prince in 1871 and 1872. It went into many editions. In this year "Frances Spira and Other Poems" was produced, dedicated to Alfred Tennyson, and published by Edward Moxon. Mr. Westland Marston, himself a poet, gives a regular criticism of the book in a letter, part of which I quote:—

"Your poems," he says, "have frequently called forth my sympathy and admiration. In the opening poem and that called 'Within sight of Jerusalem,' you have, in my opinion, shown rare psychological insight, giving the individuality of the speakers in all felicity and distinctness. The 'Hewn Stones' are, however, my favourites, for their bold, generous war with shams, their sympathy with the suffering and the wronged, and their vivid force of expression. 'John Fairfax' I liked much, till I reached the end, which I thought too painful and dreadful. After 'Hewn Stones' I liked 'The Castle in the Air,' which has singular grace, fancy, and music of rhythm. I have met frequently with stray proofs of your poetic powers, but your volume

is the highest and most important expression of them, and I sincerely congratulate you on all it fulfils.—Believe me, ever faithfully yours,

“WESTLAND MARSTON.”

In October of the same year the Rev. J. M. Bellew wrote to my father respecting the book (“*Frances Spira*”). He says he has

“been studying it with a view to my winter season’s readings. There is a piece with which I could make a great effect, I feel certain; but, unfortunately, it is not possible to read it in public. I mean ‘*John Fairfax*.’ By the time I got to the end I should have the house about my ears worse than Vining at the Princess’s the other night. . . . Have you no dramatic piece in MS. sympathetic and not abhorrent in subject to the people? I should only be too happy to have a chance of reading it.”

In answer to this my father evidently offered to write something for him, and gave a list of subjects, for Mr. Bellew writes again as follows :—

“69 PORTSDOWN ROAD,
“MAIDA HILL, *Sat., Oct. 14, 1865.*”

“It is sermon day, therefore I am up to the eyes in work; but I start for Liverpool, Chester, &c., on Monday morning, so I must give you a line.

“‘*Marie Antoinette*’ is the subject. I think if it were written like Aytoun’s ‘*Montrose*’ or Byron’s ‘*Lara*’ it could be made most telling. Ugolino or Raleigh are both excellent; but they could not touch the Queen.

There is so much pathos, tragedy, and thrilling incident in her story: her watching through the chink for the Dauphin; her looking up to the window for the priest's blessing at the appointed spot as she went to execution; her hair changing to white in one night! What a field there is for a poet's pen!

"Undoubtedly this is THE subject."

The letter here goes into business details, and then Mr. Bellew complains of the pieces he has made popular being taken by other people, and he mentions some well-known names of persons now dead, who, he says, came and "sat listening, watching my treatment," and then, "sure enough, shortly after, the very pieces I had been reading were *posted up*"; so he says he should prefer a piece in MS., and would not like it published till it had run a season. He winds up his letter by referring to another poem in the book ("Frances Spira"); it is called "Resurgam."

"I think," says Mr. Bellew, "it would read most powerfully, *but* its story is *seduction*; and amongst my audiences I constantly have heaps of young girls. *I dare not read* such a subject. I constantly have had 'Guinivere' and 'Vivien' objected to.—Yours truly,

"J. M. BELLEW."

I have quoted this because it is characteristic of the times, and shows how taste has altered.

"Marie Antoinette" was not written; my father took a far more homely subject, which was sufficiently dramatic. About this time he read in the papers the account of a platelayer rushing forward and saving a little child who, seeing its father on the other side of the line, had attempted to cross in front of a train; the child was saved, the man was killed. My father called his verses "A Railway Incident," and Mr. Bellew read it for several seasons with great effect, and afterwards it was published in *Cassell's Magazine*. I quote a letter from Mr. Moy Thomas, the then editor:—

"UPPER CHEYNE ROW, Feb. 21, 1867.

"Very fine indeed!

"You shall have a proof, to make any alterations you please, without fail. I think the opening lines delay the effect, and there is something to me so beautiful and original in that stanza—

‘The great north line a serpent with two heads,
Each in a noisy city wrapped in smoke.’

There is no question about its being a fine poem, and it will do us good service. *I* too read it out (at breakfast), and it made people's 'blood tingle'—*somebody* indeed actually cried!

"By the way, it is one of the misfortunes of these 'actualities' from the papers that you must have a prose reference or explanation somewhere. I wish we could get

over that. I think prose—even a line—always jars at the head of a poem. A poet should never let his readers see him in prose if he can help it; I mean, of course, not at the same time. Perhaps we might put a footnote to the end of the poem. I am not sure it would look better; but we must let the reader know, or remind him, that it is a true story. Mrs. Friswell ought to be proud of you; and of course she is.—Yours very sincerely,

“MOY THOMAS.”

In the summer of 1865 my father was very well. He drove down to Bicester, and, in the autumn, to Ramsgate. Near Bicester lived one of my father's schoolfellows, a farmer. Mr. Fowler was a big man, with a fine red face and a jolly laugh, a typical John Bull or stage farmer. He delighted in practical jokes, and when he, my father, and Mr. Greville (a solicitor) met, they behaved like schoolboys.

At Edmonton, close to the famous bell, there still stands a low rambling house, in which lives Mr. William Pulley, another of my father's schoolfellows. In the pleasant old red-walled garden, on many a summer afternoon, the four schoolfellows and their wives and children met. There was no train then to go rattling past, letting fall a shower of blacks, no noisy tramcars: even *now*, in that quiet garden, London is lost sight of; *then* it

seemed really in the country, for Edmonton was only to be reached by a long and tedious omnibus journey.

In the thatched summer-house many an article was written, but it was more often a place of merry meetings and much chaff and laughter, as they tried to outvie each other in repartee and jokes.

On one occasion they were discussing a recent fire, when my father remarked that "to make the scene more dramatic it only wanted a lover to rescue his mistress from the flames, but," he added, "some one would have been sure to call it a *jolly lark*." "I should say it was a *flamingo*," retorted Greville. He was perhaps the most irrepressible of the party, but Mr. Pulley was not behind the others in playing practical jokes, and his wife aided and abetted him. Once, after an oyster supper, he proposed that they should glue the oyster shells together, repack the barrel, and send it down to Fowler, who was "entertaining Greville and Friswell." This was done, Mr. Greville being let into the secret, that he might watch proceedings and report upon them. The barrel duly arrived, much to the delight of the farmer, who at once determined to give his guests and neighbours a treat; so the oysters were put into oatmeal and water.

Next morning there was a curious slimy look about the water, and on examination the trick was discovered. Both Mr. and Mrs. Fowler enjoyed the joke, and told it to their guests at the supper table, where there was no lack of good fare.

I have spoken in the preface of how my father would play with us and tell us stories. When we had friends he always gave us some of his company. I can remember his swallowing pieces of apple cut to resemble 'candle-ends, and how sceptical all we children were, and how we talked it over afterwards, for we were none of us *quite sure*. Prince Ghica's son spent his holidays with us, and he and my eldest brother (who was a chemist from his childhood) often upset the household by some sudden explosion or appalling smell that could almost be felt. My father was so angry upon such occasions, that the boys stood in considerable awe of him; but when they were not by, he would laugh and give us comic descriptions of the Distracted Author and the fiend boys.

The distracted author was writing in the quietude of his study an essay on dreaming—it was to be poetical and soothing—when he was almost shot out of his chair and his ideas scattered. Was it the

crack of doom ; or the Fenians ? It must be the Fenians ; they had blown up the Houses of Parliament ! He goes out to discover the extent of the damage, and comes across the boy fiends creeping with singed hair and black faces downstairs. They have been trying an experiment in the attic, and it has "only gone wrong" through Demetri tumbling upstairs and mixing the ingredients.

Another time the distracted author becomes conscious of a most atrocious smell ; it penetrates everywhere ; so he opens his study door, and finds the house is full of it. A servant passes, her face in her handkerchief, and when addressed she can only shake her head and gasp. "Oh, those boys ! what are they at now ?" says the distracted author. Only trying to make phosphorus in the back kitchen. Dick had saved his money and invested it in a furnace, and they had confiscated a bag of bones found in the coal-cellar. It was mid-winter, and the windows and doors had to be opened for hours before the fumes could be got rid of.

To me, who was the delicate one, my father was kindness itself ; he would coax me to eat a certain quantity of meat, which I was ordered, by putting it in the most tempting manner on my

plate, and declaring "it was fit for a princess." When the wire went wrong, and my doll's eyes would not shut, or were shut and would not open, he would cut a neat hole in the back of her head and put everything right, even fixing her eyes in if they had tumbled out, and so hide the hole that I felt sure she was not hurt by the operation.

I was sent into the country to school for a short time, and though I was very young, he came down to see me always once or twice in the term, and took me out. The letters he wrote to me were almost always illustrated, or written in the tiniest hand ; the books he sent were fairy tales, for which I had a passion.

He was very fond of adopting various mottoes, though his favourite, and the one he had engraved below the family arms, was "Patience and Faith." At this time, perhaps because he was troubled and anxious, he adopted "Don't worrit yourself," and, half in fun and half in earnest, he drew a crimson ribbon on a black ground, and wrote in fanciful letters in turquoise blue, "Don't worrit yourself," requesting me to work it for a cushion. I did it, much to the amazement of the mistresses and girls at school, who declined to help or advise me in my difficult task, declaring they

could "only work from a proper pattern." The letters were very remarkable; the shading was violent, so much so that my mother improved it; but the cushion was made up, and much noticed by many celebrated people, who would read it, quote it, and approve of it, as a good motto for all workers.

Through "The Gentle Life" we had become acquainted with a very charming family at Ramsgate, and in the autumn of 1865 my father drove down from London in his phaeton and took lodgings, and we spent a very pleasant holiday. I had been ill, and was there with my father and mother. Having the phaeton, we drove about the country, lunched at Kingsgate Castle, and "did" all the churches, for Mr. — was an architect. When my father returned to town he sent the following letter to his hostess:—

"Oct. 28, 1865.

"How can I thank you for your kind, genial, and witty letter, one I shall always prize, and that delighted us all.

"You ask how could I sit up with 'ossy' men at Green Street. Ah! you don't know me. I was sad at parting, and, like the Laureate, glad very likely to 'Hang with grooms and porters on the bridge,' and to listen

to a quantity of idle talk which may come some day into use. As you know, nothing is ever missed, although somewhere in the 'moon' there is a receptacle, as Empedocles relates, for lost things—lost thoughts, overturned good purposes, mislaid thimbles, and those wandering lost loves which most of us men, and women too, know of! Poor little naked Cupids. I never see any of them about—and I find a few as I wander on through life—but I would like to take them in, and dry them and comfort them, from the rain and cold. I have attempted in the margin, *un pauvre Cupidon* thus about to commence his journey to the moon."

"Nov. 3, 1865.

"And here I have stayed, laid up by business and a cold that will not leave me. And surely you must think me very rude because I have written to others and not to you. But you know that writing to the lady of the house is a somewhat important matter; and, to tell the truth, I never quite surmounted a certain awe in which I hold all my hostesses (what an ugly word that is; it is right, isn't it?). But this Nov. 3 brought a letter from Miss —, which I thought I could, cunning soul, answer in yours, and thus kill two very nice birds (though not of the genus *anser*) with one stone.

"The chronicles of our lives have been more than usually dull. I have a new book out, 'Montaigne,' which Mrs. Friswell will send to Miss S., and two guinea books, wonderful and beautiful as to art, gold, and cover, in which I am concerned. Tell Miss S. that the lawsuit is progressing; we have set the intruder at defiance, and the order of the day now is, 'Stand to briefs; make ready your affidavits; charge your consciences with

tremendous oaths ; bully witnesses ; curse counsel, and, if possible, assassinate attorneys.' However, I am very jolly about it, though I write this with a headache, a rueful countenance, and internal feelings more easily suggested than described.

"There was a portion of Miss S.'s letter which related to our young friend in the *chapeau blanc*. I know him to be as good as he is peculiar ; and he is like olives—he is an acquired taste, of which we simple people are *rather fond*.

"When, dear Mrs. S., I get one or two copies of those portraits to which Miss S. alludes, which are 'thoroughly characteristic and satisfactory,' I will send one to each of you two ladies. On Wednesday we go (Emmy and I), by appointment, to Mr. H. P. Robinson's for two portraits on purpose for our friends ; amongst those we know we reckon you in a foremost place.—Believe me ever, very truly yours."

In 1866 he published "Varia," readings from rare books, and began to edit "The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia," by Sir Philip Sidney. "Essays by Montaigne" also came out in this year. All these books form part of "The Gentle Life" series.

CHAPTER XI

An attack of pleurisy—An unfortunate blunder—A general epistle—A little letter to a little boy—An appeal for the poor—The “Censor” dinners.

AT the close of 1866 my father was very unwell, and his illness developed into pleurisy. By some unfortunate blunder the word “pleurisy” was turned into paralysis, and the following paragraph appeared in *The Sunday Gazette* :—

“Misfortune has fallen on Mr. Hain Friswell in the shape of paralysis of the brain. He was only a day or two since accounted a strong man, capable of much hard work, to which he is no stranger. Those who know what good service he has done in his time, think him deserving a place on the Civil List.”

Then there appeared paragraphs in other papers, such as the following, which, I believe, was in *The Pall Mall Gazette* :—

“We regret to learn that Mr. Hain Friswell has been seized with a sudden and dangerous illness, and it is feared he will be compelled to abandon his literary labours. Mr. Friswell has been a hard worker, and his talent has been

well directed and usefully exercised. His severe affliction will be greatly deplored by his numerous friends and acquaintances, and the absence of his pleasant literary contributions from newspapers and periodicals will excite very general regret. It is understood that a movement is on foot to secure a pension to Mr. Friswell from the very limited fund placed at the disposal of our Government. Lord Derby will scarcely venture to withhold his practical sympathy from a man who has during many years occupied a prominent and honourable position in the world of letters."

In consequence of these paragraphs the house was besieged by callers and letters, and it was some little time before my mother grasped the situation and guessed what had occurred—that is, she did not know her husband was supposed to be suffering from paralysis of the brain. When she did, my father wrote the following :—

"Nov. 23, 1866.

"Will you kindly contradict the paragraph which you inserted from *The Sunday Gazette*, stating that misfortune has fallen on me in the shape of 'paralysis of the brain.' The paragraph, though kindly meant, is calculated to do me much injury. Severe illness, which will for a long time, if I obey the doctor's orders, keep me from much literary work, has indeed afflicted me; but the blow fell upon my lungs, not my brain. Pleuritis, hurriedly spoken by the narrator, may easily be mistaken for paralysis. I

thank God that He has tried me with the former, not the latter—the most sad and fearful affliction which can befall a man of letters.—Obediently yours.”

In January 1867 a dreadful accident occurred on the ice in Regent’s Park. My father records it in his diary thus:—

“Phillips calls, who has just been submerged in ice for two hours. They put him in water at 125° F.”

Laurence Phillips was the son of a neighbour, and the author of a well-known biographical dictionary. He felt no ill effects from his immersion. My brother entered the Park just as the ice had given way and the people were rushing about, their faces blanched with terror. Over a hundred were submerged, and about forty were drowned. The scene was appalling.

In the May of 1867 my father went to Paris, to the Exhibition, for *The Art Journal* and *The Illustrated London News*. The first letter is to my mother, and commences thus:—

“May 7, 1867.

“MY DEAR EMMA,—Here am I at the Exposition, very well, very hot, very tired, and very jolly. I have met Dr. Diamond Simpson, Thornton Thompson, and one or two others. We all dine at five together, and hope to

do well. I have been introduced to Cole, C.B., and shall be put on the free list, which will save money.

"I am glad you did not come, as the French railway *grande vitesse* would simply have shaken you to pieces. I met such a nice young fellow, and we tried to sleep, but I was awake all night, and saw the sun rise and the French women going to labour, while the mists rose up from the flat landscape. I went at once to Rue Grammont, Hotel Manchester, where you may address me. I pay four francs for a cupboard, but breezy, because *au quatrième*; and I found our old friend, Madame Stoll Delmas, as lively as ever. Boots also recognised me. Hotel very full. I am going to see Simpson's lodgings, to see if they are better.

"The Exhibition is unfurnished and without any *coup d'œil*—not to be compared with any of ours, and as hot as an oven. You cannot imagine the intense heat; all Paris is ablaze with the sun. The gardens around unfinished, full of huts and houses—Russian, Turkish, &c.—some are pretty, others like a sham. It is a long way out of Paris, near the Arch of Triumph—all that part we remember so rustic is now built over, and Paris is a new town. . . . I shall soon get very tired of the place. I begin work to-morrow.

"'The Gentle Life' is to the fore in the book department, and looks well.—Ever yours, most truly, dear wife,

"J. HAIN FRISWELL.

"*P.S.*—Love to *all*—tell them *all* how I think of them and you continually."

I have quoted this little postscript as it is characteristic, and shows my father's strong affec-

tion for his family and home. Another letter written at this time runs as follows:—

“PARIS, *May* 18, 1867.

“MY DEAR IZARD, — This is a general epistle of James to be sent over and read; but I send it you in return for a letter written to me, like an ‘amoosin’ little cuss’ as you are. And a very good letter it was, sir, and it had its effect—as much as anything can on me, a man who is getting to a selfish age, and is living in a selfish country. I have met many people here, but you know how dispersed foreigners are in Paris. We wave our lily hands, and smile, and say ‘ta, ta!’ and then we part. I have been to a circus, where I saw Leotard, who did wondrous things, and an English clown with a fine face, who made us all laugh by playing the fiddle and crying over it. He could not speak French; all the better, his clowning was good. I saw also, at the Ambigu Comique, a capital actress as Mignon, from Goethe’s ‘Wilhelm Meister.’ She sang beautifully, and in Mignon her first words were ‘Le vieux Diable est mort!’ Good news, is it not, considering he has plagued me for about forty years? However, I was charmed with the play. I am troubled with the post here. They will charge me full weight for all my proofs sent over, because corrected; so I went to the chef at the Grand Bureau des Postes—such a small place!—and, after a grand palaver, came back without doing any good. The French are a people very much behindhand in many things. I get up at eight o’clock, breakfast at nine—beef-steak or mutton chops, coffee, milk, or tea—and then go until six for dinner. I find this eating a fair meal

at each period suits me very well. T'other night I went with a young Englishman to the Rue Babet, and saw there a lot of athletes who wrestled in the French style, and very good it was. They were fine men, and played fair. Of course the advertisements begged us to listen to the cracking of bones, groans, and struggles of these giants. There was not much trouble, but the play was good. There was one fellow a perfect Milo, a 'Duke's boney prizer.' . . . Tell Mrs. Friswell that I have received her letter this morning. The post does not come in here till half-past ten. I will buy the presents desired, and do what I can. The 'Pal-lay-roy-al'—there are two English girls who will come and gossip in our smoking and writing rooms, and are talking about it—has fallen off dreadfully! Very shabby and very bad, I can tell you. Weather very much better; glass rising slowly and consistently, so you will have fine weather as well as we. I have seen Sala, Quin, Barnes, and other artists and Bohemians, and find them pretty jolly! They amuse themselves by sitting outside the circle of the Exposition, in the English beer-houses, drinking good English beer, and patriotically abusing everything French. I have seen Dallas, of *The Times*.

"I don't know that I have anything more to say in this general epistle, and I have nothing to add privately. I don't think that things are so very dear, but somehow the money seems to glide and slip away, because you pay for everything. If you ask my opinion as to your coming, I should say, 'Don't.' Paris has lots of attractions besides the Exhibition, and that is merely a gigantic bazaar—all the Palais Royal and the Boulevard shops turned into an extensive glass house. Everybody is trying to sell, but at enormous prices; and antiques and

semi-antiques at Paris fetch frightful prices. Our china that we bought at S——'s would cost three times as much; and so on.

"Good - bye. God bless everybody. I am looking blooming, and feel rather seedy after work is done; and I don't like the work, and take very readily to being lazy. I find nothing to do but read *The Times* and *Galignani*; dreary, dreary, smoke and go to bed. The Boulevards are crowded, the Brasseries swarm; absinthe flows in sticky streams, iced water in this cold weather, café and hot milk, and 'p'tits verres' are yelled for by Frenchmen, of all sizes, hairy and not hairy; and the *cocottes*, that is the fast ladies, walk along in visible Hessians and extraordinary bonnets; our friends rush off to operas and plays, and I quietly take my pipe and philosophise *au cinquième*. Good-bye."

The next letter is to my brother Harry, and is written on a tiny piece of paper, in very small, fine writing that can be clearly read even by a little boy:—

"PARIS, *May* 27, 1867.

"MY DEAR HARRY,—I hope you have been a very good boy, and that I shall hear a good account of you from Miss ——¹ when I come home. I should have been delighted to have had you all with me, but I have never forgotten any one of you for one instant. There are not many French boys about here—one or two schools; but they generally send boys away in the country, and one does not see red-faced, rough-headed boys, with dirty

¹ Miss ——, my governess.

hands, at all here. Paris is a beautiful city, full of fine buildings, and has crowds of soldiers, and all the policemen wear cocked hats and have long swords. The houses are all of stone, and twice as high as those in London; and the work-people dress in blue linen, and the women wear no bonnets, but walk about the street in pretty white caps. Some day, when you are older, you must come to Paris and see for yourself what a fine city it is. They do not keep any Sunday here, but work just as hard, building, buying and selling, and crying fish, and playing organs. This I do not like, because I love Sunday at home with my wife and children. And now I must conclude my little letter, thanking you for yours, and signing my name as, my dear Harry—Your affectionate father,

J. HAIN FRISWELL."

My father could not do without some of his family, and as my mother could not go to him, he sent for my eldest brother. They returned from Paris on the 29th of May, and on the 19th of June there is a record of proposed work in his diary :—

"Agreed with Marston (S. Low & Co.) to do 'Other People's Windows,' 'The Silent Hour,' 'Table-Talk of Napoleon,' and edit 'New Atlantis and Utopia,' 'Course of English Literature,' 'Abdalla.'"

Most of these books came out in the following year.

Coming home from a public meeting one wet night, my father saw sitting on a doorstep, bitterly

crying, and quite wet through, a boy of about fourteen. He stopped and questioned him, and learnt that he was a page-boy, who, having displeased his mistress, had run away and knew not where to go, his home being in the country. My father took him home; my mother saw that his clothes were dried, and gave him supper. They then did not know what to do with him; for my father, recalling vividly the vagaries of the "vulgar little boy" in the "Ingoldsby Legends," was afraid to send him to bed in the spare room, as my mother suggested, so he took him to Mr. Williams, at the Refuge in Great Queen Street. He then wrote to his mistress and his mother, and the lady very kindly promised my father to overlook the boy's conduct and take him back; the poor mother was so grateful, she came up to town on purpose to thank him. This is only one of the instances of my father's kindness to the poor and afflicted, and his was the hand which first started Christmas dinners.

In December my father, as the "Censor," made the following appeal in *The Morning Star* on behalf of the starving boys and girls in the Metropolis:—

"There are a great many boys in London—not slouchers, mouchers, and pickpockets—but honest little boys, and girls too; and to some dozens of these the 'Censor' wants to

give a Christmas dinner, and one or two other dinners as well during the coming hard times. 'If A,' said Sidney Smith, 'sees B in want, he is sure to ask C to relieve him.' Well, in this case, A asks the whole Alphabet to subscribe this fund for doing a palpable good, and if all those whose hearts are touched by the hungry faces and the pleading looks of the truly poor will only help the 'Censor,' and add to the subscription he has already made, there will not be a merrier nor a larger party on that blessed day than that which he will gather round him. Now, gentlemen, who throws the first little coin into the hat? It will be a hard winter, and for one or two days at least we can do not problematic but certain good in feeding these hungry little ones, and our own dinners will be sweeter too. Subscriptions sent to the editor or to the subscriber will be thankfully acknowledged and carefully applied."

He little thought how promptly and generously his appeal would be answered. One gentleman, Mr. Samuel Plimsoll, M.P., sent a cheque for £50; and there were lots of guineas, crowns, florins, shillings, and even threepenny-bits. Thus the "Censor" dinner of 1867 proved one of the biggest of its kind, and was really the origin of the Robin dinners and all the other dinners—and they go by various names—that are given to poor children at Christmas in the present day, though not a word is ever spoken in memory or praise of their founder.

My father wrote the appeal, and a committee was formed. Justin McCarthy, Edmund Yates,

Ashby Sterry, Clement Scott, and my father undertook to receive and distribute the money. Every one contributed, and here I quote the graceful verse in which Mr. Clement Scott sent his contribution :

“ ’Tis only a trifle I have to give—

I would to Heaven ’twere tenfold more ;

Though its terribly hard at times to live,

And the world is bitter and hearts are sore.

A poor little guinea is all I send,

And though the little ones lose their toys,

I still can echo your song, my friend,

‘ May God in His mercy bless the boys.’

“ Yours always.”

In many quarters of London large numbers of the destitute were fed out of the fund, and then there remained a balance in hand. On Christmas Day 400 children sat down to a dinner of roast beef and plum pudding, served under the Gospel Arch, a mission hall in North London ; 300 men, women, and children had both dinner and tea in a building in Golden Lane, a thoroughfare in whose name there is a certain amount of humour of the grim and ferocious kind, seeing that even copper is an object of great curiosity to the dwellers therein ; large quantities of bread, meat, potatoes, and other substantial “ compliments of the season ” were sent to 250 families in starving Millwall ; and

208 little ones dined together at the Lambeth Baths.

The "Censor" made liberal grants to clergymen and gentlemen officiating for the relief of distress—to the Rev. C. J. Whitmore, for Millwall; to Mr. Ewart, for Gospel Arch; to Mr. Orsman, for Golden Lane; to the Rev. G. M. Murphy, for the New Cut; and to the Rev. Alfred White, a Roman Catholic priest, for Paddington; and to several others. These gentlemen increased the grant by contributions raised in their own parishes. But the largest of the "Censor" dinners took place at the Refuge, then in Great Queen Street, High Holborn (now in Shaftesbury Avenue), where 520 children of both sexes were regaled on the national dish. To bring this about, the "Censor" placed himself in communication with the Rev. G. W. M'Cree, known as the Bishop of St. Giles's, and so well known that his name needs no more than mention here: he fought the good fight against poverty, hunger, disease, and vice in one of the foulest spots in London, viz., Seven Dials.

The Refuge is a kind of poor boys' casual ward, and was called into existence by Mr. James Greenwood's famous account of a night in a casual

ward. It houses a great number of boys, and teaches them trades. It has branches in the country for them to learn agriculture, and it has the ships *Arethusa* and *Chichester* as training-ships for those who wish to be sailors.

The building in Great Queen Street was spacious ; it had large workshops, dormitories, and schoolrooms, and in the last named the dinner took place. Here is an account, written at the time, which describes the scene better than I can, though I remember helping :—

“ Many ladies and gentlemen, subscribers to the ‘Censor’ fund, came down at one to see the children eat their dinner. They found them seated at long tables running the entire breadth of the hall, their eyes fixed devoutly on a large counter, on which smoked already two or three fine joints of beef, and in perfect readiness to begin. Before they begin, however, a word as to their appearance. We hope it will not be expected of us to say that they had all pretty blue eyes, and clean faces, and curly flaxen hair, and that they only wanted a suit of knickerbockers apiece to make them little cherubs, because such was not the case. Nor, on the other hand, were they all gaunt and ragged and black. Not a few were tolerably healthy looking children in white pinafores, and with clean chubby hands and round cheeks ; for the poorest people naturally take care that the bairns shall be stinted last. Still there were among them examples enough of the worst school of the picturesque, of little hands that had long lost

the dimples of childhood, of little faces from which the red and even the white had fled, wherein the look of premature *knowingness*, anxiety, weariness—as if life had already been tried and found wanting—would have been droll if it had not been horrible. This chiefly among the girls. Among the boys there were not wanting examples of picturesque poverty, in fierce, frowning faces shaded by matted hair; in hands that in action played the devil's tattoo as a voluntary with the knife and fork, and in repose spontaneously coiled themselves up into fists.

“When the children had looked at the beef a little while, they were told to prepare for grace, which was said by the Rev. William Brock. Nothing now intervened between them and their dinner but the processes of carving and distribution. These were not such simple matters as they may appear to the proprietors of small families, and upwards of five hundred children had to be served, and served several times. Professional waiters could not be thought of, for they would have wanted paying. There were not half enough attendants attached to the place, so the ladies and gentlemen present volunteered for the service.

“And then bachelors being ordered to take their places behind the joints, were obliged to confess that they had never carved anything larger than a rasher of bacon in their lives, and were made to fetch and carry, and give place to better men. In a little time hundreds of pewter platters, well filled with beef and potatoes, were placed before the guests, and Mr. Williams, the secretary, gave the word ‘Begin’—and then—oh the clatter that ensued. It was not five hundred feeding like one; no, that phrase may do for the decorous feasts of the Church and the Law, of fat prebendaries and well-fed Q.C.’s, who have already breakfasted, and lunched, and enjoyed half-a-dozen inter-

ludes of biscuits and sherry throughout the day; it was five hundred feeding like five hundred, each for himself, and no pudding for the hindmost. Knives and forks rose and fell in zigzag 'all together one after another,' like the oars of a Cockney eight. Some of the boys soon abandoned them and took to the weapons of nature; the girls, with that instinct of propriety that never deserts their sex, clung to the encumbrances of art, only trying now and then if they could get more service out of their knives by grappling them near the interdicted point. They were exceedingly well-behaved were the little girls. Woman in miniature is still woman. The harshest thing heard amongst them was a request from Sally to Jane that she would not 'scrooge' her so; whereas the boys, when the eye of the vigilant secretary was off them, now and then had furtive fights, which, however, they enjoyed without any interference with the business of the hour, by propping one another with their knees beneath the table, while they still kept their hands employed in the work of destruction. But the funniest sights were not to be found among the children. After all, those who waited on them were best worth looking at. Critics cut up the beef, and clergymen handed it round; essayists ladled out the potatoes, fox-hunters served the bread, the Universities 'assisted to gravy,' and the Civil Service took the empties away. The ladies, as may be expected, were everywhere quietly helpful, and made every little service appear doubly precious by their grace in doing it—only it must be confessed that they sometimes connived at the rogueries of ingenious boys who, having secreted the contents of their platter in their pockets, meekly asked when they were going to be served.

"A mere buzz and a clatter had almost become the

normal state of things, when suddenly there was heard a mighty roar. Pudding was on the table; four or five of these thirteen-inch Christmas projectiles were now lying where the bones of the beef had lain but a moment before. How, in the twinkling of an eye, those puddings fell to pieces and disappeared, can hardly be imagined. The transformations of pantomime were nothing to it: how little boys, who had hitherto borne an unblemished reputation, were caught trying to look hungry, long after they had made large slices of those puddings part of themselves; how even little girls for a moment lost their sense of the becoming, and clutched at the speckled treat—it would not be gracious to tell.

“Enough to say that new proof was afforded of the great truth that we of English stock, whatever our differences of creed, caste, temper, character, and opinion, all unite in a universal respect and affection—nay, even reverence and love—for ‘Chris’mas Plum.’

“When dinner was over a short grace was sung, the Rev. G. W. M’Cree leading, and then three cheers were given for the ‘Censor,’ who was introduced to the boys and made them a short speech. Mr. Plimsoll followed him, and the secretary spoke the parting word—the word evidently of a man who knew exactly how to manage children, and, above all, these children. They cheered him to the very echo, as indeed we fear they would have cheered a much less deserving man, so thoroughly well pleased did they seem with themselves and everything about them. After that they defiled out of the rooms in the best order, each receiving an orange at the head of the stairs. It was a cheering and yet a sad procession, for the clean bright golden fruit contrasted painfully with the dirty, rust-hued covering of most of the bosoms against which it was pressed.

None of the bosoms in question, however, seemed to be oppressed for a moment with the feeling of such contrast; on the contrary, they were full of a joy that found expression in songs, sung to the tune of 'We won't go home till morning,' in honour of their benefactors."

Mr. McCarthy has kindly sent me the following short and charming picture of his remembrance of my father:—

"Many a year is in its grave since I first saw—even since I last saw—my old friend Hain Friswell. I first came to know him early in the sixties, not long after I had settled in London. He was then a well-known and rising literary man. He had published his 'Gentle Life,' a book which had an immense circulation, and he was recognised by all of us as a man of capacity, steadfastness, and resolve. We, the other younger men, were all, in a certain sense, Bohemians then—I mean in the better sense, the artistic sense; but Hain Friswell was singularly unlike most Bohemians in the regularity and steadiness with which he set himself to accomplish each piece of work which it came into his mind to do. He was as regular and as much up to time as Anthony Trollope himself. There was also in him a quality which likewise distinguished him from most of the heedless, joyous Bohemian band—he had an intense interest in the struggles and the sufferings of the poor. He was always trying to bear a practical, helping hand in the relief of the distressed and the education of the ignorant, especially where children were concerned. He used to write for *The Evening Star* a sort of *feuilleton* called, at his own suggestion, 'The

Censor.' *The Evening Star* was, perhaps I need hardly say, the afternoon issue of *The Morning Star*, of which I was at that time the editor. *The Morning Star* contained a weekly article by the late Edmund Yates, who described himself as 'The Flaneur.' Neither writer was much in sympathy with the Radical politics of *The Star*, but each had his distinct province of literature and art, theatricals and town-talk. Friswell, however, brought into his 'Censor' articles a good many promptings to public charity on behalf of the little waifs and strays of London slums. At last he started, with the approval of *The Star*, a series of dinners for poor and hungry children, which were called the 'Censor's' dinners. This was before the time when slumming had become a fashion and dinners to poor children a recognised charitable institution. Friswell made a great success of his enterprise, and he took an honest delight in working it out. He managed to get money from the charitable and the liberal to help him in his undertaking, and I think I have never seen a happier face than that of Hain Friswell when presiding over and conducting the 'Censor's' dinners. Perhaps some poor men or women reading these lines may recall an experience of Hain Friswell's kindness as one of the bright memories of their childhood's days. I knew Hain Friswell for many years, and saw much to admire in his nature, his intellect, and his character, but I think the association which I cherish most in regard to him is that of his kindness to the little children, who had nothing to offer him in return but their unskilled, spontaneous thanks.

"JUSTIN MCCARTHY."

CHAPTER XII

“The Bayard Series”—Professor Morley’s discovery—“The Silent Hour”—A letter from Ruskin—*The Censor* Magazine—Professor Herkomer—Thieves’ literature—The Clerkenwell Benevolent Fund—A visit to Charles Kingsley—M. Van de Weyer asks my father to meet the King of the Belgians—My father is taken ill at Frampton Court.

My father was asked if he would edit a collection of famous books which Messrs. Sampson Low wished to republish. He consented, and gave them the name of “The Bayard Series.”

To many of the books he wrote an introductory essay, notably to “Abdallah,” by Edouard Laboulaye, a beautiful story, and well translated by Mary L. Booth; “The Table-Talk and Opinions of Napoleon Buonaparte;” “The Round Table,” by William Hazlitt; and to “The Essays of Abraham Cowley” he added a life of the author.

He was most ably assisted by many well-known men. Swinburne he induced to write an introduction to “Christabel and Other Poems,” by S. T. Coleridge; and “The King and the

Commons," a collection of Cavalier and Puritan songs, was selected by Henry Morley, Professor of English Literature, University College, London. "The History of Caliph Vathek," by Beckford, was printed verbatim from the first edition. "Essays in Mosaic," by Thomas Ballantyne, were short lay sermons containing some of the most earnest and weighty sentences of the most thoughtful writers. "Memoirs of Socrates" and many more were in the collection. The series was most charmingly got up in limp covers, and they were pocket editions.

Professor Morley, in his researches in the British Museum for his book "The King and the Commons," was fortunate enough to discover in a copy of Milton's English and Latin Poems, printed in 1645, a poem in MS., which appeared to be by Milton, and to have his autograph attached. I print the poem, and my father's account of it, written to *The Standard*:—

“ ‘AN EPITAPH.

“ ‘He whom Heaven did call away
Out of this Hermitage of clay,
Has left some reliques in this Urne
As a pledge of his returne.

Maanwhile y^e Muses doe deplore
The losse of this their paramour
Wth whom he sported ere y^e day
Budded forth its tender ray.
And now Apollo leaves his laies
And puts on cypres for his bayes ;
The sacred sisters tune their quills
Onely to y^e blubbering rills,
And whilst his doome they thinke upon,
Make their owne teares their Helicon,
Leaving y^e two-topt Mount divine
To turne votaries to his shrine.
Think not (reader) one [me] less blest
Sleeping in this narrow cist
Than if my ashes did lie hid
Under some stately pyramid.
If a rich tombe makes happy yⁿ
That Bee was happier far yⁿ men
Who busie in y^e thymie wood
Was fettered by y^e golden flood
W^{ch} fr^o y^e Amber-weeping Tree
Distilleth downe so plenteously ;
For so this little wanton Elfe
Most gloriously enshrined itselfe
A tombe whose beauty might compare
With Cleopatra's sepulcher.

In this little bed my dust
Incurtained round I here entrust
Whilst my more pure and nobler part
Lyes entomb'd in every heart.
'Then pass on gently ye y^t mourne,
'Touch not this mine hollowed Urne
'These Ashes w^{ch} doe here remain
A vital tincture still retaine ;

A seminall forme within y^e deeps
 Of this little chaos sleeps ;
 The thred of life untwisted is
 Into its first existencies ;
 Infant Nature cradled here
 In its principles appeare :
 This plant th^s entered into dust
 In its Ashes rest it must
 Until sweet Psyche shall Inspire
 A softening and ætifik (*) fire
 And in her fost'ring armes enfold
 This Heavy and this earthly mould ;
 Then, as I am Ile be no more
 But bloome and blossome b . . .
 When this cold numnes shall retreate
 By a more yⁿ Chymich heat.

“ ‘ J. M. 10^{ber} 1647.’ ”

* Producer of first causes.

“ A copy of this poem has been printed in *The Times* ; but with the poet's contractions removed and the spelling modernised. The above is the version given by the poet.

“ The following letter from Mr. Hain Friswell, the editor of ‘ The Bayard Series,’ to *The Standard*, gives the principal facts of the case :—

“ Sir,—Will you allow me, as editor of ‘ The Bayard Series,’ for which Professor Morley is editing certain Cavalier and Puritan songs, in the prosecution of which task he made so important a discovery, to state in a few words the chief facts of the case? In my position I may be expected to be biassed somewhat in favour of the scholar who, at my solicitation, undertook the work he has

so conscientiously performed; but I trust that a spirit of fairness will correct this bias. The state of the whole question is simply this. In the King's Library, at the British Museum, Mr. Morley discovered a little 12mo book, about the size of a large commercial envelope, of Milton's Minor Poems. It has an atrocious portrait of Milton, with a Greek inscription beneath it, contains certain English and Latin poems, and is bound in vellum with toned edges. On the fly-leaf at the end is written, as Mr. Morley and I think, after severe comparison, as many Museum authorities also think, and as many do *not* think, in Milton's small hand, cramped purposely to get all the lines in, the epitaph printed in *The Times* of Thursday, 16th instant. The writer has divided the page down the centre, and filled one side completely, then he has turned the book sideways towards him, and written the remainder of the fifty-four lines in two columns, concluding by signing his initials, J. M. or P. M., 10ber (December, not Ober.) 1647. He has entitled the verses merely 'An Epitaph,' and they are written in the same measure as his celebrated epitaph to the Marchioness of Winchester, that is, seven lines of iambuses and one of trochaic measure; but it seems that the author, if Milton, every now and then throws over the measure and depends entirely upon the *ictus poeticus*, the beat or pause, which is far sweeter than mere scansion. The internal evidence of the poetry therefore is, that the lines are either by Milton or by one who set himself closely to imitate the Miltonic manner. Those for the verses recognise in them some sweet and solemn music thoroughly worthy of the great master; but it is fair to say, that a true poet who has written to me this morning declares, that 'they are only fit to be written by the poet Close,' so much may critics differ. The initial lines seem to me noble. They

are presumed, of course, to be inscribed on a funeral urn:—

‘He whom Heaven did call away
Out of this Hermitage of clay,
Hath left some reliques in this urne
As a pledge of his returne.’

They are quite as good as those on the Marchioness of Winchester, and the epitaph presents the internal evidence of close parallels, which Lord Winchilsea has entirely overlooked. These parallel passages have been placed in my hands by Dr. Ingleby, and could be very considerably added to. For instance, Lord Winchilsea objects to the line

‘The sacred sisters tune their quill,’

as non-Miltonic, but in ‘Lycidas’ we have the same word used to the same rhyme—

‘Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills;
He touch’d the tender stops of various *quills*.’

“In Shakespeare’s epitaph, by Milton, which has been universally praised, we have—

‘Or that his hallowed reliques should lie hid
Under a star-y-pointing pyramid.’

“In this poem we have—

‘Than if my ashes did lie hid
Under some stately pyramid.’

“In the poem ‘which from the amber weeping tree,’

in 'Lycidas' 'the amber dropping tree,' line 863. In the poem 'the thread of life *untwisted*' is in 'L'Allegro'—

'Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul.'

"In the poem, again, we meet with this image much objected to by Lord Winchilsea—

'Meanwhile the Muses do deplore
The losse of this their paramour.'

And in the sublime hymn on Christ's nativity—

'It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.'

"I will show your readers a dozen other parallels, only observing that if this poem is not Milton's the plagiarist must have indeed been impudent.

"One word more upon the signature. I send you a *fac-simile* of the initials which strike me and others as J. M.—others as P. M. Unfortunately, unless we obliterate the Museum stamp, we shall never be able, authoritatively, to pronounce which it is. Let me conclude by thanking the gentlemen at the Museum for their extreme politeness in affording me an opportunity of carefully examining the new discovery, and for their attempt to elucidate the many difficulties connected with it.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

HAIN FRISWELL.

"From a paragraph in *The John Bull* it appears that no less a scholar than Archdeacon Denison considers the poem 'eminently beautiful, very complete and finished, and worthy of the great name it bears.'"

In a note attached to the letter, the editor of the paper in question remarks:—

“We have also been favoured with a *fac-simile* of the autograph, and must agree with Mr. Friswell, although making due allowance for the presence of the Museum stamp, as to the difficulty of reading the initials as P. M. The style also, notwithstanding the ‘blubbering rills’ to which so strong an objection has been taken, is distinctly that of Milton. It should be remembered also that ‘blubbering,’ although now considered a very vulgar expression, was ‘vulgar’ in Milton’s time in another sense of the word vulgar. Further, both the alliteration and onomatopœia mark the epithet as at once appropriate and poetical.”

In 1868 “The Silent Hour” was published. In the preface my father speaks of the success of “The Gentle Life” series, and says he has been urged by many critics, especially “by one of the most learned,” “to speak at large upon the faith which was present in ‘The Gentle Life,’ but everywhere more felt than seen. ‘The Silent Hour’ is an attempt to answer that call.”

“Not every man,” says Sir Thomas Browne, “is a fit advocate for the truth, and the skilful and well-practised soldier may know his own prowess, and yet be content to fight under cover and with numerous supports.” So my father says he “has

called upon many dear comrades, high commanders in that army which he follows, to treat in the manner of essays those weighty concerns which come home to the business and bosoms of men . . . in that silent hour which all of us should often spend, and always on that holy day of rest which divides each busy week from another, and to the intrusive, wrangling, noisy world, offers for a brief period the quiet of heaven." There are some of the finest essays in the English language in this volume, by Bishop Latimer, Jeremy Taylor, Isaac Barrow; and a few charming pages on the "Sanctity of Home," by John Ruskin. Here follows his letter to my father:—

"DENMARK HILL,
"Nov. 2, 1869.

"I am sincerely obliged to you by your compliance with my request, and I shall feel honoured by your making extracts at your absolute pleasure from *any* work of mine without exception, after the third volume of 'Modern Painters.' It was between writing the second and third that I discovered the falsehood of several religious doctrines in which I had been educated, and it is curious that the parts of my writings which I most regret are nearly always extracted for the public . . .

"There is little I wish altered in *The Seven Lamps*, &c. I am very proud of the chapters on Imagination in the second of 'Modern Painters,' but I should be grateful

to you if you would take *carte blanche* for anything published after third of 'M. P.,' and let the earlier books be silent.—Most truly yours,
JOHN RUSKIN."

"Other People's Windows" was published in this year. I have mentioned the Windows as short stories appearing from time to time in magazines. My father says in his humorous preface that he hopes that, "as he has not thrown any mud into his neighbours' windows, that heavy stones and brick-bats will not be canted with the cant of criticism through his." Certainly the critics were unanimous in praise of the book, especially of the story, "At Last, or the Window of a Woman's Heart."

On the 21st of April 1868 he records:—

"Dinner with Watts Phillips in his chambers. Present—Mrs. Stirling, Miss Herbert, Mr. and Mrs. Toole, Mrs. Phillips, Mr. Tom Hood, and another. Plenty of anecdotes and theatrical gossip."

On the 23rd of May the first number of *The Censor* came out as a magazine of "satire, politics, literature, and art." My father speaks of how the word Censor has been corrupted. To be censorious is thought to be ill-natured and unjust, but the most honourable magistracy of Rome was the

Censorship, and the Censors were above suspicion, kindly, and just, and it is in this sense that "Censor" was given as a name to the paper. I can find no list of contributors; but many well-known people wrote for it, I see by their letters. It did not last long, yet in its short career one good thing it achieved—it brought Professor Herkomer before the public and to London. I can well remember his coming—a shy youth of eighteen or so. Here is a letter from him to my father:—

"SOUTHAMPTON, *Sept.* 15, 1868.

"Don't think me dilatory; it is not my fault that you did not receive the sketch in time. I posted it early on Friday. I have *drawn another to-day*, which I send you this *afternoon*, in case the first one is lost. . . . I have put still less colour in this one. Mr. Jones has, I suppose, told you why; but if you wish more colour I will put it in—anything to please, *as I am anxious to get on*. I must thank you much for the kind *interest you take in me*. All I wish *is to draw for you*.—Believe me, dear Sir, yours obediently."

My father thought a great deal of Mr. Herkomer's talent, and was very enthusiastic over his sketches when they arrived, and very much annoyed when they were spoilt in the cutting or printing.

All his life my father was continually writing against thieves' literature. He considered there should be an Act for the prevention of certain printed works "tending to increase crime;" they were, he said, "calculated to incite young persons to violent, illegal, or criminal acts." In *The Censor* there is a picture of two boys looking in a window at magazines with such titles as "Gallows Dick," "The Boy Pirate," "Dick Turpin," "Jack Sheppard," "Sixteen String Jack," "The Knight of the Road;" then there is a placard outside the shop with "Boys! boys!! boys!!! Look out for the 'Boy Burker.'" It was this kind of literature my father thought so injurious. In *The Family Herald*, in *The Publishers' Circular*, anywhere and everywhere, he wrote against it.

Lord Lytton, seeing one of these articles, considered himself attacked, and wrote a very angry letter to Messrs. S. Low & Co. My father answered it as follows:—

"April 9, 1869.

"MY LORD,—At the request of my publisher I have undertaken to furnish the short editorial introduction to *The Publishers' Circular*. I hasten to take whatever blame there may be on myself, and to inform you that,

had you read the paragraph more carefully, you would have seen you are not alluded to, and that the *P. C.* is not 'the vehicle of affronts to yourself.' I there state plainly enough, that 'if a bookseller gets his farthing a copy on his penny Paul Clifford, he will,' &c.; and your Lordship certainly never published at so low a price. Distinctly have I over and over again attacked thieves' literature; but in the instances of penny numbers, of which there are no less than thirty-seven examples, including three Paul Cliffords, seven distinct Jack Sheppards, and Blue Skins and Knights of the Road in abundance—these books are continually found in the hands of boy thieves. I enclose a specimen to your Lordship. . . . You will at once see you are not implicated in the charge, and I should be only too glad to announce to the world, from any of the paper pulpits in which I have the liberty of preaching, that your Lordship would bring in a bill to prosecute such publishers. I have the skeleton of such a bill purposely drawn up, and at your service. . . . As you may not know my name, I beg to subscribe myself,

"J. HAIN FRISWELL,
"Author of '*The Gentle Life*.'"

About this time Irving was playing in "Dearer than Life" at the Queen's, in Long Acre, and he often came to our house. I can remember his coming one day as I had just finished practising; we met in the drawing-room doorway. "So it was *you* playing Mendelssohn so nicely," he said, as I shook hands. "Just come back and play me No. 1." "I can *not*," I began; but Irving had me by the sleeve,

and I found myself at the piano, the piece before me. "I am very fond of No. 1," said Irving, sinking into a chair close to the piano, but rather behind me.

We were taught "to do as we were told and not make a fuss," so, in spite of nervous fears, I began to play. I was sure it would be an ignominious failure, but I reached the double bar quite creditably, then I glanced at my companion. He was sitting as I have often seen him on the stage, sunk down in the chair, his chin upon his breast, his feet stretched out in front of him, his arms lying along the arms of the chair, the hands limply hanging. I thought him asleep, and congratulated myself. I went on with No. 1, and became so interested, I forgot Irving. When I reached the end I commenced it again, and played it all through, not forgetting to repeat the passages as marked. Then I sat a moment turning over my book. When I tried to rise I could not; my frock was fixed to the seat; I found Irving's hand was upon it. "Go on," said a solemn voice; "very well played, shows sympathy—and feeling." Next I played No. 30, and was very glad when my father entered and took Irving to the study.

Long before "The Bells" was put upon the

stage we heard about it, and were all most anxious for its success. On the first night (1871) my father went with Irving. He came to ask him a day or so before; and as I was coming downstairs from the second floor, I saw the actor emerging from the study. Neither he nor my father saw me, but I heard the latter say, "Of course I will come—always intended to. It's sure to be a success; don't worry yourself." "Very kind of you to say so. No, don't come down." Irving shut the door quickly, and turned to go down the three steps to the next landing. As he turned again I saw his face; it was very melancholy; then I put my head over the balusters and said, "Well! so you are to act in 'The Bells;' are you not glad?" "It may not be a success," he said, with a sigh. "Oh yes, it will," I replied. "You *know* you are a *rattling good actor*; my father says so. *Now* you will be a *great success*, and I shall be the first to congratulate you." He looked up and almost laughed. "Thank you! I shall take your words as a good omen," he replied, shaking hands between the balusters. Then he ran downstairs still smiling. As to me, I went to the top of the long flight, and, in spite of housemaid and open door, I called out, "It will be a great success; I know it will. *You*

see if I am not right." Irving waved his hand to me.

My father, opening his door, asked, "Is that Mr. Irving you are shouting at?" "Yes; they have put on 'The Bells,' and he don't seem at all glad. I can't think why, when it's just what he wanted." "Ah!" said my father, "I can understand; people are often nervous when they attain their desire. I like him all the better," he added to himself. "Oh, well," I replied, "I told him he was a rattling good actor, and that you said so." "No doubt *that* cheered him," laughed my father.

My mother and father used to go once or twice a year to concerts and other entertainments at Wellington College, where my father's ward, Prince Ghica's son, was educated. It was at Wellington College that my father was presented to the Prince and Princess of Wales, and it was there that he first met Canon Kingsley, who asked him to come and see him.

"LYNN, *Tuesday.*

"Your letter followed me to Sandringham, or I should have answered at once. I am delighted, but not surprised, to find you and Professor Morley appreciate Euphues.

"I preached a bit of him at Sandringham on Sunday; a good doctrine for royalty—" 'Tis virtue, gentlemen, that

maketh the poor rich, the base-born noble, the deformed beautiful, the subject a sovereign!’—one of the finest things in the English language. I fear Scott has done the book lasting harm; probably he never read it right. I do not feel inclined to write a preface to it, however kind and flattering your advice that I should do so. I do not think my name would help the book; I am sure yours would. What I should do would be to recommend and to review it, and spread it in all ways among young men and young women over whom I have influence.

“Meanwhile, I am glad to find you are a man; men who care for ‘The Gentle Life,’ without being superstitious or hysterical, are growing more and more rare. If you are again at Wellington College, and would accept hospitality at a quiet parsonage, where no footmen are kept or good dinners given, but people eat plain mutton and enjoy music and good talk, I shall be delighted to see you. Your photograph has not reached me, having been kept by Mrs. Kingsley, who, admiring ‘The Gentle Life’ as much as I, longs to meet and know you.

“Thank you sincerely for the kind words in your letter. Kind words are like good wine to a hard-worked brain and somewhat sad heart.—Yours ever most sincerely.”

My father went to Eversley and stayed a few days. He was charmed with the people and the place.

In the autumn of 1869 the post of librarian to the Queen was vacant. M. Van de Weyer and Canon Duckworth both thought my father should apply for it. Canon Duckworth writes:

"I can see no reason why you should not apply for the librarianship. I imagine that not many possess qualifications superior to your own." He urges my father to send in his name forthwith to Major-General T. M. Biddulph, K.C.B., and to speak to M. Van de Weyer, the Bishop of Oxford, and Canon Kingsley, who were his friends, and whose good words would be valuable. M. Van de Weyer writes :—

"My time has been so taken up by the King's¹ presence that I have been reluctantly obliged to postpone all letter-writing; but I have spoken to Canon Duckworth, as you wished. Nobody has a higher opinion of your literary labours than myself; your books have been for long favourites in our family, and I have never lost an opportunity of recommending them to others. You kindly attach to a word of mine more importance than it deserves. I shall, however, have great pleasure in expressing my opinion in the proper quarter.—Believe me, yours very truly."

M. Van de Weyer was not personally acquainted with my father at this time, but in 1870 he came to Great Russell Street to see him, and on the King's next visit to London my father was invited to an evening reception to be presented to the King.

¹ King of the Belgians.

In November 1869 Mr. Richard Brinsley Sheridan asked my father if he would come to his place in Dorchester, Frampton Court, as he would like him to meet Motley, the author of "The Dutch Republic." November was usually a very busy month with my father, as there were so many Christmas books to see and review, besides proofs of his own to read ; and he could not go then, but went in the beginning of December.

The second night he was there he was taken with a fit of coughing at dinner, and finding that his handkerchief was spotted with blood, he left the table, went into the library, and rang the bell. A footman came, and he requested him to send some one for a doctor and then to assist him to bed, but he was on no account to disturb the company or frighten the ladies. "Don't mention this in the dining-room," said my father. He was very pale, and spoke with difficulty. The man was frightened, forgot what he was told, and rushed into the dining-room, exclaiming, "He's dying! he's dying! the gentleman's dying!"

Mr. and Mrs. Sheridan, the Hon. Mrs. Norton, and several people came to my father, who begged them to go back and not to be alarmed. All he wanted was to be assisted into bed, and to take

some ice or vinegar till the doctor came. My mother was telegraphed for. I remember the telegram coming late at night, and the awful look on my mother's face when she read it. She and my grandmother were up all night; my mother could not sleep, she said, and my grandmother looked out trains and packed up. In the cold grey morning my mother started, and soon after she had gone a telegram came for me to accompany her, but it was too late.

Mr. and Mrs. Sheridan and Mrs. Norton were most kind. They must have spent a dull Christmas, having put off the mummers and all other festivities, for my father nearly died. For ten days or so my mother never left his side, and she has numbers of little notes written to her by Mrs. Sheridan and Mrs. Norton, who used to send them up by the maids. When he was able to see any one, these kind ladies came and read or talked to him while my mother rested. On his getting somewhat convalescent, he wrote to his old friend Mr. Izard as follows:—

“FRAMPTON COURT,
“DORCHESTER, *Jan.* 1870.

“Thanks for your letter and pretty card. You hardly seem to realise how ill I have been. If I am to get to London, it will be from death's door, at which I knocked

loudly. It has pleased God to spare me yet awhile for my wife and children.

"The people here are wondrously kind, and come and sit and talk each day with me. It is a grand place—fifty rooms, twenty servants, a splendid park, a French cook, and Heaven knows what. . . . The Hon. Mrs. Norton is full of anecdote, and comes and gossips by the hour in my sick-room. . . . To-day is the second day I have had my clothes on, and I feel very queer, of course. I am awfully thin.

"All people in town are kind in their inquiries. Curiously, about an hour before I broke this blood-vessel, and lay a-dying in the country, Charley Williams called on Mrs. Friswell in town, and told her it was rumoured that I was half dead! My wife unwittingly denied the story, and yet, accounting for difference of time, 'twas true.

"Good-bye. I am weak as water, tired as a dog, and melancholy as a sick bear. Kind remembrances *chez-vous*."

He did not forget us at home, and wrote as soon as he was able, knowing how glad we should be to see his hand:—

"FRAMPTON COURT,
"DORCHESTER, *Jan.* 12, 1870.

"DEAR DICK AND LAURA,—We shall come home on Friday, I believe, but will let you know. I thank you both for your letters and sympathy. Have no care for any rebuff, so that I get my health and strength and can work for you. This is my new motto and prayer: *Sanitas—sapientia—vires*; *health, wisdom, and strength*, and I'll go in and win yet.

"Mrs. Norton is so kind; she says she has adopted me. M. Van de Weyer has written—all here are full of the most delicate kindness. Don't either of you therefore trouble about the librarianship. God knew it would not do for me, and wants me for my old work.

"Of course you liked the party; the Blackburns are always charming. Love to grandma, Harry, and all. God bless you both, my dear children.—Your affectionate father,

"J. HAIN FRISWELL."

They returned from Frampton Court on the 15th of January. I shall never forget my nervous anxiety as the time drew near for them to come. My grandmother hurried out and opened the door when the cab stopped. I could scarcely move for fear I should find my father very much changed, but, above all, I was afraid of showing how glad I was to see him. I knew that any kind of emotion would be bad for him. So I crept out of the room and placed myself in the shadow of the hat-stand, and there, in the middle of the hall, stood my father in his long coat, the light from the gas streaming upon him. He seemed taller, thinner, and older, but he smiled, and said in his strong, cheerful voice: "Well, here we are, Lolly, as well and as jolly as sand-boys; *so glad to get home.*"

CHAPTER XIII

Letters from Canon Duckworth and M. Van de Weyer—Hon. Mrs. Norton—Down to Bexley—Next door to Bulliman's—"One of Two"—*Once a Week* and its editor—A rush for the doctor—Two melancholy days at Bayard Cottage.

WE heard on good authority that the candidates for the librarianship were sifted till only two remained—my father and the gentleman who was finally chosen ; and we also heard that he was preferred because he was unmarried. My father, I am sure, was disappointed ; it would have given him ease of mind, which meant so much in his state of health. But he made light of his disappointment ; he never liked to sadden us, and we were then so anxious about him. Canon Duckworth writes from Osborne and says :—

"Your kind letter gave me the first intelligence of the appointment of the royal librarian. I can only say my testimony was most willingly given, and that I think Her Majesty would have been well served by one who has done so much by his writings to purify the life and elevate the taste of her subjects. I do sincerely condole with you upon the accident of your health, and trust its effects may soon pass away. Meanwhile, I know how trying to you

proscribed idleness must be. I had wondered why 'The Gentle Life' had not appeared in its *édition de luxe*,¹ among Christmas books, and little suspected the unfortunate causes of delay. With best wishes for your speedy and complete recovery, and many thanks for your kindness in writing to me at the cost, I am afraid, of too great an effort.—Believe me, very sincerely yours,

R. DUCKWORTH.

M. Van de Weyer, in writing to the Hon. Mrs. Norton, said :—

"I am a great admirer of Mr. Friswell's works, and have, when they first appeared, recommended them in *all* quarters. I long to have an opportunity of making his acquaintance. I can perfectly understand the great importance it would be to a man of his merit to have a position independent of publishers and booksellers. We and posterity would be the gainers by it."

Mrs. Norton always declared that my father would not have liked the post of librarian.

After the disappointment of the librarianship it would seem from the following letter that M. Van de Weyer was trying to get my father a pension.

"FRAMPTON COURT,
"DORCHESTER, *April* 1870.

"MY DEAR MR. FRISWELL,—I was really glad to hear my letters to you and Mr. Gladstone had been received. I was so fearful of some mistake or miscarriage. In either case,

¹ The Queen's Edition, spoken of in chapter ix.

when you were so ill and worried, I should have appeared a monster. I wish you could have told me that M. Van de Weyer's efforts were successful, and that you were given a Civil List crumb, although you deserve a whole loaf.

"Who is Mr. Hole, who has written a pleasant book on roses, now being reprinted? Mrs. Sheridan gave me a good account of you, and she is loud in her praises of your daughter. Remember us most kindly to Mrs. Friswell, and believe me, yours most faithfully, R. B. SHERIDAN."

Again Mr. Sheridan writes, on June 13, 1870; and after speaking of the death of Charles Dickens as a loss to all, he says:—

"My sister, Mrs. Norton, as well as myself, have you in constant remembrance, and we sincerely hope that Bishops, Queen, Princesses, and Ambassadors may succeed in their endeavours to obtain what you so much merit. If they do not, I have no longer any faith in interest."

My father never received any pension from the Civil List; had he done so, no doubt it would have added a few years to his life; but I know he fully appreciated, as we all did, the kindness of those who tried to get it for him, and for my mother after his death, though in that case also their efforts failed.

In 1870 many people visited us in Great Russell Street—authors, artists, actors, clergymen, ambassadors, editors, and poets—nearly all those who

bore well-known names that were then or have since become famous. On Sunday afternoons M. Van de Weyer would drive up and stop for an hour's chat with my father, or the Sheridans and Mrs. Norton came. Mrs. Norton frequently came, and when she found us alone she would tell us many an anecdote of people she knew or had known. Often my father and mother went to luncheon with her in Chesterfield Street, Mayfair. She would send such notes as the following :—

“Friday Evening.

“GOOD HENCHMAN,—I go away on Tuesday or Wednesday. I should like to see you before then—to talk about your books, now Easter eggs are hatched, and the Irish Land Bill dormant. I hope you will be able to come to lunch on Sunday at a punctual two. If the pretty daughter will come with Mamma and Papa, I shall be glad to see her. . . . Richard has outraged Harrow and society in general by returning to school with a six-barrelled revolver *loaded* in his coat pocket !! What things boys do and what risks they *run* !—In haste, yours ever truly, C. NORTON.”

I well remember the first time my father and mother took me to luncheon with her. Except for her grand-daughter, she was alone. It was on Academy Sunday, so my father and mother left to visit some studios, promising to return for me. Then we adjourned to Mrs. Norton's pretty

drawing-room, and we girls sat on a rug at her feet, while she told us stories of her youth. I can recall the scene now—the beautiful old lady, the pretty room, the bright fire, and the pale sunlight that, struggling through the rose-coloured blinds, threw on sofas, chairs, cabinets, and old china a mystic glow. One anecdote I remember; it was about her sons—she had three, and one day she was talking to them, telling them when they grew up they would have to get their own living. She told them how great a thing it was to grow up an honest, brave, true-hearted man, and she illustrated her little lecture by giving instances of some of the great men who had fought for the good of mankind in the army, the church, law, or science. When she finished she asked, “Now, boys, what would you like to be?” and they cried with one voice, “Freebooters! mamma, Freebooters!”

After the anecdotes I sang to her, amongst other songs, her own “Juanita,” which was once so popular. Then she told us about her sisters, Lady Dufferin and the Duchess of Somerset; and when my father and mother came, and we at last emerged into the street, I felt as if I had come from the old world into the new, and it seemed

to me not half so pleasant as that in which those three lovely women lived. But I had heard nothing of troubles; the rose-coloured light of that pretty room had coloured the stories, and I was only conscious of a vague sadness in Mrs. Norton's face and voice.

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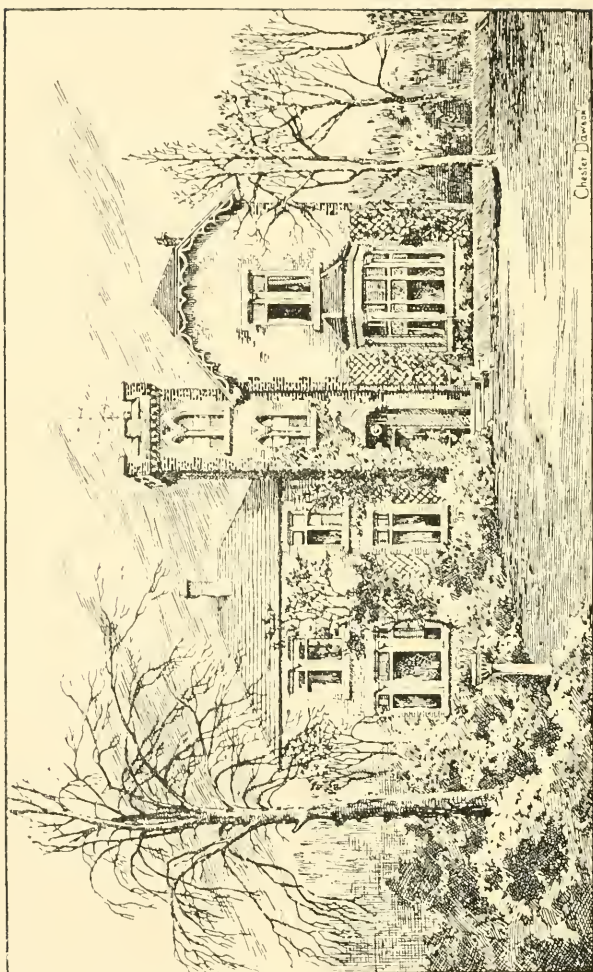
My father took a cottage at Bexley Heath, Kent. On the 21st of June 1870 there is this entry in his diary :—

“Moved to Bexley Heath. My poor dog Teens jumped from the waggon and was killed. We buried him in the centre bed in the garden. Poor Emma and Ellen the servant cried. A most faithful, gentle, and good-tempered dog—the best I ever had or hope to have.”

On the 23rd of June he wrote a letter to us all left behind in Great Russell Street :—

“BAYARD COTTAGE,
“BEXLEY HEATH.

“We are all well; thank you for your letters, especially Dick. We are getting quite tidy, and to-day had a splendid dish of strawberries from our own garden. Dick can come down with me and Harry on Saturday, for I must be up to take notes. Mamma will settle when Laura comes; at present she proposes that dear ‘little Lolly’ should come down with Becky on Tuesday, and stay till Ben fetches them on Wednesday. The slip about Kingsley ‘arrove’



Charles Dwyer

safely. Tell Dick and Laura that we miss their cheerful but somewhat jangling, conversations. We go to bed about ten, and get up at all sorts of hours. The gardener comes at five. Ellen was up at four one morning. She sends her love to Susan ; she tells me she is 'very fond of Susan,'—says Gilpin, 'so am I.' We shall have all the rough work done when you swells come down. Now it is like camping out in Australia—quite as jolly and not half as nasty. You may drop Burt Villa ; it is now only Bayard Cottage."

It *was* like camping out. We took some furniture from Great Russell Street and hired some. The cottage, or villa, as it was called, stood back from the road, the Dover road, over which the coaches used to run when Bexley Heath was the resort of highwaymen. Indeed, there are remarkable stories told to this day as to how some of the inhabitants of the Heath made their money. We were very much amused at the place and the people. Our habitation stood in a beautiful and prolific garden, but it went by various names, and generally when we went shopping and desired anything sent, we used to go through the whole string of names, commencing with Burt Villa and ending with Cedar Cottage ; it was no use. Then we described the position, and mentioned that there was a school next door, kept by a Mr. Bullman. At that a smile would

dawn on the shopkeeper's face, and he or she would say, "Oh, I know now, sir; next door to Bulliman's." At last *we* used to say, "Send it next door to Bulliman's."¹

That Christmas there appeared a story in one of the Christmas annuals, entitled "Next Door to Bulliman's." It was written by my father, and describes Bexley Heath, under the name of Boxly Down, in a very true but humorous manner.

The family was now divided. My grandmother, who had lived with us for many years, was in London with my elder brother; my other brother was at school, and we were at Bexley Heath. But in August my father said he must go to town, and as he was far from well, my mother thought it best to go also; so we lent our cottage to a friend, and were all together in Great Russell Street again.

"One of Two" was running through *Once a Week*. The editor was in his own person proprietor, staff, and manager, I presume; for I often went to the office with my father, and never saw any one there but Mr. Rice and a boy of twelve.

¹ Finally the cottage was christened "Bayard Cottage," in honour of the Bayard Series, and it retains the name to this day.

The editor sat in a small back room, with pens, ink, and paper before him. There were dusty pigeon-holes full of yellow papers. Were they MSS., and were they "rejected" or "accepted," I wondered. Who read them I could never find out.

It was a dismal place, and one day when we went in the editor was very melancholy. We thought the sale of the paper had suddenly stopped; but no, his hair was "getting thin on the top," and he had "*only* discovered it that morning. Could my father tell him what to do?" My father, with the most solemn face, gave him a wonderful recipe, in which cayenne, cod-liver oil, paraffin, and many other incongruous things were mixed. Before writing it down Mr. Rice looked from my father to me; but I was equal to the occasion, and never smiled. Afterwards I made my father laugh by saying disgustedly, "Fancy thinking of your *hair* when there are *manuscripts* to read." Mr. Rice always declared he tried the mixture; he certainly published the recipe in his first novel, "Ready-Money Mortiboy."

He was almost daily in our house. He was very particular about his dress; never without

a flower in his button-hole, and scent on a large white handkerchief. We all liked him very much, but he seemed quite different from the authors, artists, or journalists who used to drop in at five o'clock for tea and a chat. The conversation generally ran on the last new book or picture, Gladstone's or "Dizzy's" speeches, the theatre or the church; but Mr. Rice talked of the city stocks and shares, "bulls" and "bears," the money market, &c. He was very fond of jokes, and let off all the old stock speeches about mothers-in-law which have been heard *ad nauseam*. But he was lucky in having a listener to whom they were quite new. I had never heard them, nor had I read "Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lectures." Mr. Rice's jokes I could not always see, and his catch phrases puzzled me and led me into many errors; one in particular I remember.

My mother was obliged to return to Bexley Heath on the 2nd of September. She was anxious about my father's health, and left particular injunctions with my grandmother and me to take great care of him, and to persuade him not to go out in the evening, for, like many invalids, he would not believe how delicate he

was ; and we felt the responsibility heavily when my mother was away. About seven in the evening the editor of *Once a Week* came, and I wished he had not, for I knew he would take my father to the theatre or a club. It was no use my asking my father not to go ; so after a struggle—for I did not know what Mr. Rice would think—I went into the hall and said, “Oh, if you please, Mr. Rice, if my father proposes to go out, say you would rather not ; that you would rather stay in the study.”

Mr. Rice did *not* understand ; he looked at me and smiled, a fascinating smile, and said, “Won’t his mother let him out ?”

This remark appeared quite meaningless, for I could see no joke, and was myself so terribly in earnest, that I grew very hot with anger and tears, because I knew I was being laughed at.

“I don’t know what you mean,” I replied, “but hot rooms are bad for my father, and the night is cold.”

Mr. Rice still smiled, and taking out his white handkerchief with a flourish, he said, “And *can’t* she trust him, then ?”

“Trust my father ! *What do you mean ?*” I asked angrily.

I walked into the dining-room, leaving him to go upstairs. In about half-an-hour they came down, and my father said they were going to the club. I ventured to remark that the wind was very cold, but my father laughed and told me not to "put on such an anxious face—*he was all right.*"

The next morning my grandmother said she had been up half the night, my father's cough was so bad. At ten o'clock hemorrhage came on, and the cook had to run for ice. We were short of a servant, the housemaid having gone for a holiday, so I had to go for the doctor, and I well remember running out of the house and down the street, struggling to get my arms into my jacket, saying aloud, "It's come, it's come; it means death this time. O God! don't kill my father; don't let him die."

I reached Southampton Row and rushed at the first four-wheeler, tried to open the door, but could not. When the old driver came up he said, "Why, Missie, Missie, whatever is the matter?" "My father's dying; put me in," I cried; and he lifted me into the cab. I gave him the address. "Drive as fast as ever you can," I said. "All right; don't you take on, Missie," he said, as he

banged the door, hurried on to the box, and away we went at a gallop.

I had outgrown my strength and suffered from my spine, so I seldom, if ever, went out alone, and I had never been in a cab by myself in my life. I was so alarmed about my father, that for the first few moments I could not see; then, when I looked out of the window, I failed to recognise the streets and houses. The way seemed long; was the cabman taking me wrongly? Should I find myself in some slum? If I did not return, would my grandmother send again; or would she send to the nearest doctor, and so not let my father die? Oh! I hoped and prayed she would. I had just worked myself into a frenzy when we stopped at the doctor's door. The old cabman thundered at it, and I rushed past the servant straight into the consulting-room. "Come at *once*—my father's dying," I said, seizing the doctor's hand. "Nonsense; nothing of the sort. Just sit down and calm yourself, and tell me all about it." Mr. Sellwood hurriedly put some things together as he talked, he made me drink some wine, and then, taking my hand, led me out to the cab. "Drive like the wind," was all he said as we got in.

Later that morning Mr. Rice came. I think he

was troubled about my father, for he said he had "called to see how he was."

"He is not very well," I said calmly ; and as my father had expressed a wish to see him, I asked Mr. Rice to go up to his room. He went, but returned in about five minutes looking ghastly ; he sank into a chair and asked for some water. I rang for some ; I thought he would have fainted. When he could speak he said he could "not endure the sight of blood, it always turned him ;" he added, "Oh, Miss Friswell, do you think *this* my fault?"

"Why did you take him out last night?" I asked severely.

"I did not propose it," he replied.

"But you never tried to prevent his going, as I asked you."

"Then you think I *am* to blame? You are cruel." Mr. Rice looked very pale and spoke so earnestly, I began to feel sorry for him. "If he dies you will put his death at *my* door?" he continued.

"I suppose he would have had this attack," I said reluctantly, "but it was a bad night, and *then*, you need not have insinuated that my father drank."

Mr. Rice gazed at me in horrified amazement.

"I never thought of such a thing," he said.
"Your father is a most abstemious man."

"Then what *did* you mean?" I asked earnestly ; and Rice was obliged to admit that he was joking. He looked so hurt at my not understanding his jokes, that I there and then gave him a pot of jam, which was to have been sent to him, as it was something of which he was very fond. He carried it away as a peace-offering.

Later in the day my brother and I went to Bexley Heath and sent up my mother. I think we did our best to cheer her ; but when she had started and the fly was out of sight, how melancholy we were. We were very young, and complete Cockneys ; we were all alone, and knew no one.

The next day was Sunday. We rose very early, and I made the beds, while Dick lighted the fire—for the woman my mother had engaged never came, nor did we know her name or where she lived. There was a joint of beef weighing about twelve pounds to cook. I could not lift it, nor had I cooked anything but toffee in my life. The fireplace was old-fashioned, so we had to cook with a bottle-jack. These jacks turn mechanically, and are often out of order. This one had a nasty habit

of standing still if not attended to, so that the joint would burn on one side ; but if you now and then touched the jack, it gave a click and went on. But the vegetables were the difficulty. The saucepans were so heavy, that in going into the scullery to strain the potatoes, I was obliged to rest the saucepan half-way. Now there was nothing to rest it upon but the scullery window-sill. The window was open, my wrists ached, and down went the saucepan with a jerk ; the contents strewed the flower-bed. After that I ladled out the cabbage with a spoon.

My brother had to take up the joint and carry it into the dining-room. The dinner was very well cooked, but our appetites were lacking ; yet we got through the day somehow. My brother, however, wandered up and down one path in the garden, and was so silent he added to my alarm and misery.

The next morning, there being no letter, I could stand it no longer, and proposed we should "shut up the house and go home ;" but Dick would not hear of it. My father had instilled into us that we were to be obedient, and never to leave a task till it was finished, nor to abandon a post till we were told ; so my brother said, " We were

sent down here to look after this place, *and here we must stay.*"

"I can't, I can't," I cried, "for I am sure papa is dying."

Dick looked at me gloomily. "Mamma will telegraph in that case," he replied, and then he went quickly into the garden.

I went upstairs wondering if it was very wrong to wish so much to go home. I supposed it was our duty to stay; that God intended us to do so. At that time I always thought the most unpleasant way was the right one.

I ought to have made the beds, but instead I stood at the window and watched the Woolwich omnibus. Some people were talking and laughing. I wondered at their cheerfulness, just as I wondered at the bright sunny morning; how could it be so when my father was dying. I wandered into another room, and looked out into the garden. There was my brother pacing up and down like a melancholy wild animal. Watching him, I made up my mind to go home, and then I went to work. I soon smoothed over the beds and put the rooms tidy. I then went downstairs and packed up all the silver except the teapot—it was large, shaped like a melon, and I did not know

what to do with it. I thought of burying it in the garden, but I finally locked it up in a wardrobe with two loaves of bread. I packed up the beef and some butter, and I routed out my father's great-coat, which was so long and so heavy I could scarcely lift it. I laid everything ready on the dining-room table, and then I went upstairs and looked at myself in the glass.

I meant to make a call, and I was anxious no one should know there was anything the matter; but I felt so worried, I was sure it *must* show in my face. Yet my hair had not turned grey, and my complexion was as pink and white as usual. I had on a black velveteen dress; to this I added a large old point lace collar of my mother's, and walked out into the village, reflecting upon the agony that people must suffer whose hair turned white in a night, like Mr. Bellew's and Marie Antoinette's.

The former tenant of Bayard Cottage was a doctor. I had seen him once or twice, and now I went to call upon his wife, with a view to finding out if the morals of the Bexley heathen were good. With this object in view, after a little preliminary conversation about the weather and the health of her family, I asked my ques-

tions. Were there many dishonest people on the Heath? Did burglars often come down there? And could people go away and shut up their houses with safety? Mrs. R—— assured me that people could and did leave their houses; that in the country no one troubled much about bolts and bars; there was not the wickedness “stalking abroad” that there was in a great city. I was a little bewildered at this speech, and remarked that I had always thought there were more murders and robberies committed in the country. Mrs. R—— smiled, and assured me that “on Bexley Heath such things were unknown.” This was comforting, and I felt more easy about that teapot. I tried my best to be diplomatic, and though anxious to get away, I still sat chatting, or rather listening, to Mrs. R—— some moments longer. I fancy now that she must have thought something was the matter, by the kindly way she looked at me and held my hand as we bid each other good-bye. And she must have guessed why I asked those questions, for as my brother and I went up the village, half-an-hour afterwards, on our way to the station, the doctor’s wife and daughters were at their post of observation behind the curtains in the window that overlooked the road.

I returned to the cottage and knocked and rang. My brother opened the door, much astonished to see me, for he had never missed me. I told him where I had been, and for what purpose. When I had finished he remarked calmly, "Do you know you've no hat or jacket on?" I looked down at my arms, I felt my head. I had quite forgotten both hat and jacket, and wondered why the village stared.

I had much difficulty in making Dick lock up the house; but when at last I cried, he said we would go, "whatever came of it." We soon set out, he carrying the coat and the beef, I the spoons and forks. We left the key with the house agent, who wished us a pleasant holiday. I thanked him, and assured him we were not going for long. My brother said gloomily, "Why do you say that, when most likely we shall never return?" I replied, "It will never do for people to think so, or to know we are in such trouble."

I have never forgotten that walk over those long fields. We found our load very heavy, at least I did, as I was not a good walker. When we reached the station it was past six o'clock. There was no train for an hour, and, to make

matters worse, it began to rain. As we sat on the one seat the platform possessed, my courage failed me. I was worried about the cottage and the teapot; then my brother had said, "Papa will not like our leaving our post," and I knew it was true, and that anything that worried or angered him made him worse. I had had no dinner, and was cold and hungry, so I touched my brother's arm (as usual he was lost in thought, and had not spoken for a long time), and I said, "Let us go back."

"No!" replied Dick decidedly.

"We had better," said I, almost weeping.

"Do you remember that passage in the Bible about the man putting his hand to the plough?" asked Dick, in his most solemn tone.

"Yes," I said miserably, for I knew what was coming.

"Well, *we* have put *our* hands to the plough and, *right or wrong, there's no turning back now.*"

I cried till I was in the train, and then I felt things were inevitable.

When we arrived at Charing Cross there was a Scotch mist falling, and the pavements were greasy. But Dick was another being; his face lost its gloom, he flung the coat over his shoulder,

took both parcels, and bade me "catch hold," and as I took his arm, we stepped briskly across the Strand, on through Covent Garden, and were soon at home.

My grandmother's astonishment was great when we walked in, but I am sure she was glad we had come. She took me to her room, and heard all the story, then she said, "Bother the teapot ; it's only plated." She ordered supper at once, and the beef to be put on the table, and she declared "meat could not be better cooked."

When my mother came down and saw us she was annoyed, and said we should not have left Bexley ; but my grandmother interceded for us. Still they both declared we must not see our father, and that he must not know we were in the house. For three days we crept about, and dared not speak on the staircase, and then I returned with the housemaid to Bexley Heath ; I knew my father was recovering, and that was all we cared about.

CHAPTER XIV

“Modern Men of Letters”—A libel—Poor Mr. Sala’s sore point—The verdict—Mr. Sala tells us how some of his debts were paid—A simple story—A heroine in her old age.

IN the autumn of 1870 my father published some articles which had appeared in a provincial paper. They were on men of the time, and the book was called “Modern Men of Letters Honestly Criticised.” It was published by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton, and dedicated to his Excellency M. Sylvain Van de Weyer.

“The ordinary mode of criticising the results of a scholar’s hard and long-continued work is, *as we are all well aware*, to test it here and there by means of the index, and to show off the critic’s second-hand learning at the expense of the literary subject which he is dissecting, pointing out a weak point here, and an unsound spot there ; but such a mode of treatment ‘would be entirely beside the mark in the present case.’”

The above paragraph is from a review in *The Athenæum* of that year ; and my father quotes it

in his preface as a "sufficient explanation of, and excuse for, the words on the title-page" of his book, "honestly criticised." The italics are my father's, not those of the journal. They are added, he says, to mark "the openness of confession and, at the same time, the curious reservation in favour of Mr. Cox's work on 'The Myths of the Aryan Nations,' as if, in any case, so perfunctory and essentially dishonest a method could be excused."

One of the great misfortunes of the past and present-day criticism is its cliquism. The Mutual Admiration Society is like the poor, and quite as exacting. To quote the preface of "Modern Men of Letters" again, my father says: "It is an easy task to praise or blame the hard task and the virtue to do both." Before the volume appeared it was much talked about, many papers being on the *qui vive*. To criticise "Modern Men" was such a daring proposal. *The Literary World* for September 2, 1870, said:—

"We confess we are not a little anxious to see the book. If it is what it professes to be, the author must be a more fearless man than most literary men are. If his criticism be unfavourable—and surely it cannot all be flattering—he will find he had better have put his head

into a hornet's nest. Let him beware of the clique of brethren of the Society for Mutual Admiration. If he refuses them the due to which they fancy they are entitled, it will go hard with him."

It did go hard with him, for early in 1871 Mr. G. A. Sala brought an action for libel against the publishers, and the book was suppressed. I have often heard my father speak with admiration of Sala's talents; he looked upon him as a man of genius, but he considered him "utterly careless of his own reputation and of the dignity of letters." But all who read Mr. Sala's "Life and Adventures" can draw their own conclusions. I have only to say that the account he gives in the fifty-first chapter of his book, which concerns my father, is most inaccurate and ill-natured.

I have Sala's "Life" and "Modern Men of Letters" before me, and I quote from both. These are Mr. Sala's words:—

"The most malevolent, and withal the drollest, of the aspersions contained in Mr. Friswell's book had reference to that unfortunate nose of mine."

But it never affected my father in the least, and he never once mentions it in his article; so that Mr. Sala's exaggerated sentences about his nose

being, "as King Charles I.'s head was to Mr. Dick," a permanent worry and matter for discussion, &c., to my father, is ridiculous, and can only be put down to the senility of old age. Mr. Sala is again wrong in saying my father was ever at Messrs. Howell & James; he may have been there to purchase a mantle or bonnet for my mother, but this I cannot vouch for. As to his "drifting into the uncertain but delightful profession of literature," I think I have shown that there was *no drifting about him*; nor can any man be said to drift who, having made up his mind in his boyhood, worked so continuously as he did to attain his end. As to his being offended at Mr. Sala saying Mr. Hepworth Dixon called him "Mr. Frizzle," or at Mr. Sala accusing him of "acquiring his knowledge of Latin from engraving the heraldic mottoes of the nobility and gentry," Mr. Sala is, as usual, *trying* to be funny, and it would be pitiable if it were not so childish. In the first case, I don't think Mr. Hepworth Dixon would have called him "Frizzle" to his face, and if he did, my father would not have noticed it or resented it. Why should he, when, according to Mr. Percy Fitzgerald's "Memoirs of an Author," my father was called "Frizzle" by

his friends? I am quite sorry I cannot say my father acquired his knowledge of Latin in the way Mr. Sala suggests ; it would have been such an additional proof of his great ability, and so much more romantic and like what one thinks a genius ought to do, instead of having been taught by a master who was renowned for his classical attainments ; but the fact remains that Pinnock and Dr. Pain both instructed him.

Sala goes on to tell us that he had "a craze for annotating books," and he annotated "The Gentle Life" with such remarks as "*atrocious cad, sciolist, humbug, rot, and the like.*" Well ! any one is at liberty to disfigure his own books if he likes. Had my father seen this particular copy at Sala's sale, I am sure he would have bought it, and we should all have enjoyed the joke of a man like Sala reading and annotating "The Gentle Life." Sala and "The Gentle Life"! It is comic even to think of it ; we should have kept the book as a curiosity. But one wonders Sala gave himself away by mentioning the incident in his "Life," for to the public it must seem only a proof of the spite and jealousy of authors towards each other.

Mr. Sala tells us in his preface that he himself

was not amongst "the first rank of writers." No doubt he is the best judge of his own talents, and it was a mistake on the part of my father, who ranked him too highly, for he seemed to think Sala could have been in the first rank had he chosen. But it is not libellous to criticise a man's work, and Sala was well aware of this, so he took exception to the word *goguenard*. Now any one who looks up *goguenard* in a French dictionary will find it means "jocose, bantering, jovial;" it is often used as a substantive, such as "C'est une *goguenard*" (he is a jolly fellow). Sala, with a curious forgetfulness of his French (he tells us in his book he was "a fine French scholar"), said *goguenard* meant "goggle-eyed," and that it was so "in an old French dictionary." The learned counsel on both sides only found it to mean "jovial, jolly;" but who were they, to presume to correct "a fine French scholar," and one who searched "old French dictionaries"! So they allowed Mr. Sala to declare it was a reflection upon his eyes.

In his book it is his *nose*, at the trial it was his *eyes*; evidently these were sore points, and so impressed upon Mr. Sala's mind that he could not forget them, while my father mentions neither

organ. Who but a few of Sala's intimates could know his nose was broken in a fight? he told the public in his "Life" this interesting fact. I for one had known him by sight from childhood, had very often seen him, and yet not discovered his nose was broken, nor heard the story till I read his book. I am sure my father knew nothing of it, nor that he suffered with his eyes. If he did know, I reiterate that *there is nothing about either organ in* "Modern Men of Letters." Sala was too much a man of the world to suppose that every one knew all about his little afflictions or thought about them; he was well aware that each one is too busy thinking of himself; but to pose as a sorely afflicted being served his purpose, and I am told that at the trial "his virtuous indignation" was finely done. The action was brought against Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, but my father had begged it might be brought against him. Poor Sala's character suffered so much that the jury awarded him £500, which he says never did him the slightest amount of good; and here I again quote from his "Life":—

"First a firm of solicitors discovered I was in their debt for a bill of costs for £80, contracted some years previously; . . . then a worthy tradesman who supplied me

with a large quantity of earthenware, china, and glass when I furnished my house in Guildford Street, remembered I owed him £150, and the debt was within a few weeks of annihilation by the statute of limitation."

This needs no comment.

Mr. Sala tells us he paid these people. How glad they must have been that he was libelled. I have heard many people say my father was "too good a man to get on in the world," that he had "too high an ideal of what was honourable and loyal." Be that as it may, he thought it was not right that the loss should all fall upon his publishers, and though no liability attached directly to him legally, he wrote Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton as follows :—

"Feb. 27, 1871.

"I have not been idle since the verdict, and have put many gentlemen to work who promise me that something may be done to reduce the damages. I had hoped by this to have communicated to you some hopeful results. . . . I shall be most happy hereafter to consider the amount you have been bound to pay, and to do what I can to share the burden. The amount you mention is simply beyond my power to supply.—I am, yours, &c."

The amount was not reduced ; it was not likely to be, as Mr. Sala has himself shown us his creditors were waiting, and here was their chance.

Was it in human nature to let it slip? Besides, for what other purpose was the action brought? *The Times* gave a most just and fair account of the trial, for which my father wrote and thanked the editor. From their report the public could at least see both sides of the question, and could decide for themselves whether the criticism complained of was dictated by an attempt to claim a purer and higher style from a public writer, or from other motives. But this was not the case with some portions of the press, where, no doubt through the exigencies of space induced by the most crowded advertising columns, the arguments of one side alone were given, and even the summing up of the Lord Chief Justice lost its judicial and masterly impartiality.

My father, in a letter to *The Globe*, speaks as follows of Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton:—

“It is true that I had given Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton an indemnity from the very first; it is true that this was known to the other side; and that I had asked that the action should be brought against me personally; but it is no less true that Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton have generously come forward to bear a full half of the burden save my private law expenses. It is due to those gentlemen that this conduct should not be misrepresented nor unknown.”

All the reviews of the book speak well of it. I quote from one only:—

“Mr. Hain Friswell is very frank and outspoken in his criticisms, but at the same time he is *very just*. . . . The book is the most delightful we have read for some time. It is written in a fresh, piquant, and vigorous style, and displays a familiar acquaintance with the writings of the men referred to. There is a genial, kindly tone, too, pervading most of them that shows the writer has sympathy with literature.”

To turn to a pleasanter subject, it was about this time that a pathetic story was told to my father by Mr. Clutterbuck, vicar of St. Phillip's, Granville Square—for my father still took an interest in the parish where he spent the first years of his married life. It concerned a Mrs. Pugh, who, at the age of eighty, was living in “poverty, hunger, and dirt,” in a second floor back in Easton Street, Exmouth Street. My father did for her what he had done for Alfred Gunn—he appealed to the public, and her last days were not spent in the workhouse, of which she had, like so many, a great dread. Here is my father's letter to *The City Press* (and the appeal was also in *The Standard*):—

A SIMPLE STORY.

"SIR,—There is now in London, in a poor room, in a squalid street, thickly peopled and full of poor, a pretty, little, quaint old lady, of nearly eighty, whose story I beg space to tell. She is an Arnold; Dr. John Arnold, of Lincoln's Inn, was her cousin. From the time of the Conquest the 'Crown and the country has never wanted an arm' from the Arnolds to fight for them. Her great-grandfather served under Marlborough; her father under Nelson, and was captain of the main-top to Lord Collingwood, when, after the death of Nelson, he cruised the seas to protect our merchants. On board Collingwood's ship sailed Arnold and his little daughter, who was companion to Lady Collingwood. One day the frigate gave chase to a French ship armed to the teeth, crowded with men, that stole out of Brest harbour. At the roar of the cannon the little maid ran as fast as she could to hide away, but the surgeon caught her at the bottom of the companion (Surgeon Cole), ready for action too, and said, 'You'll do, my little maid; sit there and pick tow for the men's wounds.' So the little girl, trembling with fright, sat under the ladder, with busy fingers picking what we call *charpi*, and while battle roared above her, and men cheered and fell, and the 'companion' grew slippery with blood, every now and then the poor child peered forth to see if they were bringing down her father; but one of the boys covered her eyes with his hand, and said, 'Don't look, Fanny, don't look at *that*,' and then, as she supposes, some more ghastly object went by. The little maid's father was *not* carried down, and presently the firing ceased, and there was a great cheer, and the first man who stepped down into the cockpit to see his wounded men was the

great and good Lord Collingwood himself. 'Well,' said he to Surgeon Cole, with a great sigh of relief, '*thank God, that's over!*' 'What?' cried the little maid, jumping up, '*have WE beat?*' 'I do not know about *we*, my little girl,' said the great seaman, 'but the French have given in.' 'And I do know about *we*,' said Surgeon Cole, red-handed now, alas! 'for she stuck to her place and picked tow, and did her share like the rest of us.'

"True to her lineage, Fanny Arnold (married to a Pugh) sent her sons to fight for her Queen, and the last, then in the 60th Regiment, died at Devonport nine years ago, and the gentle little old woman, pretty still, though in poverty, hunger, and dirt, is in receipt of parish relief, and living—even at the present rate of butcher's meat—on 1s. 3d. a week. She is a Churchwoman and a regular communicant. Will any one aid us in rescuing her from want?"

I well remember going with my father to see "the little old lady." The house was very dirty and dilapidated, the stairs worn into holes, the plaster dropping from the walls and ceiling. But Mrs. Pugh's room was scrupulously clean, though very tiny; the fender was in two pieces, the hearth-rug in holes, there was no carpet, and the window principally consisted of brown paper. Mrs. Pugh was out, so my father suggested we should buy her a few things and make her room look more comfortable. We found our way downstairs again, and purchased a fender

and a large warm rug at a shop close by, also a thick coloured blanket for her bed, and, accompanied by the shopman, we returned to the house, and, dismissing him at the door, we carried up our purchases. Mrs. Pugh was still out, so we put down the new rug and fender, and covered the patchwork quilt with the gay blanket. We then went down again to look for a glazier and to order some coal. When we returned our heroine was in her room. She had rolled up the rug and stuffed it under the bed with the new fender, and she had the old fender and rug back in their places, and the blanket she had hung up like a shawl behind the door. My father said nothing, but I could see he was desperately disappointed. He told her, her window should be mended and cleaned, but she seemed anything but grateful; all she wanted, she said, was "a new eye" in her spectacles, as she could not read her only book, the Bible. Her husband's and sons' photographs hung round the mantelshelf, with some funeral cards. They were very faded and poor likenesses, but these were her treasures, and she quite brightened up when she talked of those long past days when she was young, and she

was very proud that the "Crown and the country had never wanted an arm of the Arnolds to fight for them."

Our visit to her was paid before the letter appeared in the papers. I do not know how long she lived, but I think about eighteen months or two years after the letter appeared; and money enough was found to keep her in comparative comfort while living, and to bury her when she died.

CHAPTER XV

“A Man’s Thoughts”—“One of Two”—A golden lock—A move into Kent—The Tower House Golden Lands—A celebrated jackdaw.

BAYARD COTTAGE had only been taken for a year, and in June 1871 we left it and returned to Great Russell Street. In the autumn of 1871 another book of essays appeared, published by the Lows; for my father was very loyal to the firm in spite of offers from other houses. The book was called “A Man’s Thoughts,” and the essays that formed it were reprinted from *The Leader*, *The London Review*, *Public Opinion*, and other papers. On the cover is one of the author’s favourite mottoes, *Labore et Ora*.

Some friend objected to the title as egotistical. Could he have known the meaning of the word, one wonders; for, as the essayist says in an article on egoists, “an author, small though he may be, is at least a man,” and he shows no more egoism than a painter, a preacher, or an actor. “These, too, seek to instruct, influence, or amuse the world;

some even dream of reforming it, by throwing their thoughts into the seething mass of opinion —‘casting their bread upon the waters,’ to use a misapplied and sacred symbol, hoping to find it after many days return to them.”

My father’s desire was certainly to instruct and influence as well as amuse; he was always trying to do some good, and his intention in naming his book was simply to give a title to certain thoughts and opinions. That he did not place any particular value on his own thoughts can be seen by the trouble he took, not only in the volume “A Man’s Thoughts,” but in most of his other books, by strengthening every proposition he made by quotations from other writers—“better and nobler minds” he calls them. But here again the wily critics still complained, which amused but did not surprise him; for he was, of course, accused of “showing off his learning” and “posing as a pedant.”

It is needless to say that it is impossible to satisfy every one, and there is always much discussion over the works of a popular author. One would not have mentioned this but for the curious accusation of the title being egotistical; for, after all, is it so much to claim to be a *man*? It cer-

tainly depends upon the estimate one puts upon the being who is called by that name; and as modern naturalists make him the far-off-descended child of an ape, in their eyes at least it is not much to claim. My father says something to this effect in his essay on egoists; he also says we cannot escape egotism: "it follows us through life; the prayer of the humble publican is as close to it as that of the proud Pharisee; we drive self away with earnest entreaties and humble prayers, with good resolutions and manly endeavour, but it fits closely to us. It is born with us, it exists with us—and some, vainly, let us hope, say that it does not die with us, but will rise again."

Authors, next to actors, I presume, are considered the most egotistical of mankind, and certainly some think of nothing but their own cleverness; and I have known one or two bore a whole room by talking of themselves and their works. The same may be said of actors or singers; but there are others just as modest, who never mention their profession. There were no interviews and no advertising your wares in little paragraphs as there is now, so that you did not hear that "the celebrated Josiah Snookes had gone to Timbuctoo to gather material for his

next novel, which, it was understood, was to give an exact geographical account of that country," &c. Instead of considering this legitimate advertising, I am sure my father would have looked upon it as egregious vanity and bad taste. For my own part, I think he was not egotistical enough.

To return to "A Man's Thoughts," it was just as much praised as the other books. One review said it was "emphatically a manly book, full of thoughts expressed with all the earnestness, kindliness, and scholarship with which Mr. Friswell's name is associated."

"One of Two,"¹ after running through *Once a Week*, came out in this year (1871) in three volumes. Everybody considered this my father's best novel. The plot, he acknowledges, was taken from the French, though he very much altered it and created several new characters. Like so many French stories it begins with a murder, and in the unravelling and detection of the crime the story consists. The plot alone came from a foreign source; the scenes and characters are thoroughly English; and had not my father confessed his

¹ A cheap edition was brought out in 1884, six years after my father's death.

indebtedness to M. Emile Gobineau, no one would have thought it was taken from a foreign source. As I have just stated, many of the characters are quite original, and the "time" of the story is more than forty years anterior to the date of that which suggested it.

The period was 1829, and my father was very much praised for the true picture he drew of the time. The secret of the murder was so well kept that, though there were several bets as to who was guilty, not one of us guessed the real culprit. Most of the reviews expressed a hope that another novel from the same pen would follow soon; but the author's health was too broken; he never wrote another. Since his long illness at Frampton Court hemorrhage had recurred again and again. It would come on suddenly, from cold, or worry, or if he were hurried or excited; in fact, the doctor said he "must not have an emotion."

The artistic nature is naturally emotional, and my father's temperament was quick, enthusiastic, passionate, and highly nervous; it was impossible to keep such a nature from feeling an emotion. The very fact of knowing he was so ill must have worried him, and did, though he was seldom cast down for long. He bore his illness with such

fortitude, patience, and cheerfulness, and was so hopeful and thankful if he had a few weeks of comparatively good health, that it was wonderful to see him, and this hopefulness was no doubt the cause of his living as long as he did, besides which his work was a great source of happiness to him.

In the autumn of 1871 he edited a book of Christmas stories for Henry S. King & Co.; it was called "Pleasure," a title he did not at all like, but the publishers did. Amongst the contributors were Mrs. Norton, Amelia B. Edwards, Swinburne, Tom Hood, Canon Kingsley, &c. My father received the following characteristic letter from Kingsley:—

"EVERSLEY RECTORY,
"WINCHESTER, *Sept.* 1871.

"MY DEAR MR. FRISWELL,—You shall have a sermon; when do you want it? My puzzle is this. Your book is meant for all manner of readers. I hold by strictly orthodox doctrine as regards the Athanasian Creed, though, as you know, I would curse no one who does not. Now it would be hard to find a sermon of mine in which that was not expressed, or at least broadly implied. And how would that suit your publication? I, of course, could not in honour expunge a word on that matter. I think, if there be time, that I might send you the MS. of two or three, from which you might choose one. And return the others please, for I am given to preaching old sermons.

"I shall probably send you one touching on 'The Gentle

Life,' and telling all ranks that they can be gentlemen and ladies without being either rich or revolutionary if they will learn to be what all folks should learn—good Christians. I hope no one short of —— at one end, and —— at the other, would object much to that.—Yours sincerely,

“C. KINGSLEY.”

In “Pleasure” there is a clever, though somewhat melancholy, article called “The Critical Spirit,” in which its author points out the general distrust, selfishness, and conceit of the age. He says there is “a deep distrust, a deep irreverence of every man towards his neighbour,” and he continues, that such a temper will lead to “anarchy”—“the anarchy of society and of the family; the anarchy of the head and the heart; which leaves poor human beings as orphans in the wilderness to cry in vain—what can I know? whom can I love?”

My father as well as Kingsley saw and deplored this temper of mind, which drove many to atheism, and some to seek consolation and refuge in Roman Ultramontaniam.

My father's senses were very acute, especially his hearing; but he had the art of so engrossing himself in his work that he would often write with people talking in the room, and yet could tell you almost all that had been said. If he

were alone, he became so absorbed that the opening of his study door would make him start almost out of his chair ; and he was so easily startled that once, when he was looking in a shop window, a young man tapped him on the shoulder with his cane, and my father started round and brought his stick down heavily across his shoulders.

I have already stated that my father was fond of taking me out with him, so that I became acquainted with printers and publishers at a very early age. One of our last London walks together was in the summer of 1872, and it must have been early in the afternoon. We had come down the side of the Square and just turned into Hart Street, when, as I held my father's arm, I felt some one pull my hair, which was "hanging down my back." Again it was pulled, and a voice said, almost in my ear, "What is the price of a golden lock?" I looked round and saw a gentlemanly man of about forty, or so I thought him, with merry brown eyes, enjoying my astonishment. He was close at my side, and again he whispered, "What must I give for a golden lock?" I had glanced up at my father, who was walking with his shoulders squared and his head well up, looking straight in front of him. To my dismay he

almost stopped and said, turning to the man, "What! what is it you want?" There was a scarcely perceptible pause. "*A golden lock?*"

"Yes!" returned the man boldly. "What ought I to give for a golden lock, and where can I get one?"

"I presume you mean a gilt one," said my father.

"No! *I must have* the genuine article."

"Well!" said my father, in a puzzled tone, "I suppose you can get it at a locksmith's, but I really don't know. I am not even sure that they make locks of gold."

We were now walking slowly on. I was at first dumb with amazement, not unmixed with fright, then I thought it best not to speak. I knew my father was quite capable in his anger of thrashing the man in the street, and I felt very annoyed as I caught the man's smiling eyes, and knew he was enjoying the joke. My father was evidently curious as to what use he was going to make of the lock, and tried to draw him out on the subject. He thought him demented, but was very much puzzled by his bright, alert manner.

"No! I don't want a padlock, I want a good-

sized lock," said the man, in answer to my father's suggestion of "a small padlock."

My father was again puzzled, and said half to himself and half to me, "Well! of all the curious things to be asked for, the price of a golden lock; *he must be mad*;" then he turned and added aloud, "There's a locksmith's close by; we shall come to the shop in a minute. You must make inquiries there; that's all I can do for you."

"Thank you," said the man, but he still walked at my side.

"As to price," continued my father, "I have not an idea, but should think it would be decidedly expensive."

"I don't mind *what* I give," replied the man, in such an impressive manner that my father again looked him sharply up and down. "There's the shop," he said curtly.

We were now at the corner of Bury Street, and about to cross the road, when my father turned suddenly round and exclaimed, "Lolly, where's Gyp?"

Gyp was a valuable dog, with long, silky, black hair. We looked about and called and whistled.

"How stupid!" exclaimed my father. "Of

course that man has stolen her. With his golden locks I thought him a lunatic; but I see it all now—he has stolen the dog, and that was a blind to take my attention.”

I could contain myself no longer, and I went off into a fit of laughter. The man, when my father began to call the dog, had run down Bury Street as fast as a stout figure would allow him. In a few moments Gyp came smiling out of the locksmith's shop, where she had gone with a friend, perhaps to buy golden locks. My father now turned his attention to me, and taking me by the arm, he gave me a little shake, saying, “Hush! don't—don't laugh like that; you will be having hysterics; and there is everybody looking at you,” and then, still holding my arm, he piloted me across the road, and the fear of the traffic soon stopped my laughter. But all the way to the Strand he made such comments as these: “He *must* have been a lunatic; who but an idiot would want a golden lock? I doubt if such a thing is made. No one but a fool would buy it, when an ordinary brass lock would answer the purpose, and look as well; but there *are* fools in the world.” When I reached home I told my mother and grandmother, and they laughed

very much. Later my father gave his account of the story, but he never knew the truth.

Ever since we had left Bexley Heath my father had talked of going to live there; in fact, all his life he spoke of having a house in the country. So he took several journeys to Bexley, and finally bought two old cottages standing in an old-fashioned garden, which ran down at the side of a lane to some raspberry and strawberry fields. The cottages he altered; building on a large wing, throwing two or three rooms into one, and raising the roof: when it was done it made a very pretty and convenient house. A tower joined the two buildings, the base being a porch, from which you entered a square hall of good dimensions. Over the porch was carved in stone, picked out with red, "*Nisi Dominus;*" and over the door into the hall, also in stone, was "*Bene velis, bene venis.*" From the upper windows you had a view over fifteen miles of country straight across to Knockholt Beeches; from the side windows you looked across the village, and saw the Dover road passing over Shooters Hill. Many a time in late November have I looked from the tower windows and seen, in imagination, the Dover mail "lumbering up

Shooters Hill." I have seen "the steaming mist," clammy and intensely cold, out of which the phantom coach appeared; I could almost hear the creaking, rattling, and rumbling as the vehicle swayed and groaned. Sometimes Jerry Cruncher stopped it, and I saw all the scene; more often it vanished over the top of the hill, which seemed almost to reach the sky; and I woke to find myself cold and stiff, my reviews unwritten, because I had been looking out of window and dreaming of "The Tale of Two Cities," that most realistic of Dickens' works. From the other window you looked across raspberry fields to the only piece of Heath that was left. It was a most romantic spot. There, amongst some trees that covered the sides of a steep hill, was an old cottage of the time of Elizabeth. The walls were a foot thick, all around the gorse bloomed, and bracken turned brown, red, and gold in the autumn sun. The road to the station wound down below. This Heath I made the scene of Dolly the chambermaid's

"Stand and deliver, O 'Beau Brocade.'"

How charmed we all were with Austin Dobson, and how well my father read his poems. But I

am anticipating; the book ("Proverbs in Poreelain") was published in 1877, and sent to my father by the author.

My father was so anxious to get away from London, and to superintend the alterations of his house, "Fair-Home," as he called it, that we let our house in Great Russell Street, and he took for three months a large new house about a mile from that which was being altered. My brother Harry, our cook, and I preceded the rest of the family. I shall never forget our arrival. My father had told us the house was new, had never been occupied, but he did not say it was unfinished, because the British workman, that hardly used and overworked person, had promised it should be ready. He had had plenty of time, but, with his usual energy and industry, he had only smoked and looked round him. When we arrived, there was a van of furniture at the door, and the house was full of men, who got in each other's way, and who appeared, from the noise they made, to be knocking the house to pieces. We soon discovered the cause of the commotion—the "builder-bogies," as we named them, were *finishing*. There were seven doors wanting, no balusters, no kitchen stove, and no floor to either kitchen or scullery.

Three charwomen were washing the floors of some of the rooms, and my father's library was being carried in and placed on wet boards; fortunately the books were packed between the shelves. There was no paper on the walls of the hall, the passages, or the rooms downstairs, and the walls were what builders call "sweating." Upstairs there were a great many large and pleasant bedrooms, and these were papered; so we took possession of four, one of which we made both sitting-room and kitchen.

There was no gas, and we were in danger of killing ourselves down the well staircase. For more than a week there was not even a hand-rail, and the whole time we were in that house there were no balusters. In consequence of this my father wrote some nonsense verses for a small cousin of mine who often stayed with us. She was about four years old, and we were very much afraid of her falling downstairs, so she learnt the verses to make her careful, the moral being—

"If you are *good* you need have no *fears*,
If you *never hurt Chinamen* saying their *prayers*,
And *always walk carefully going down stairs*."

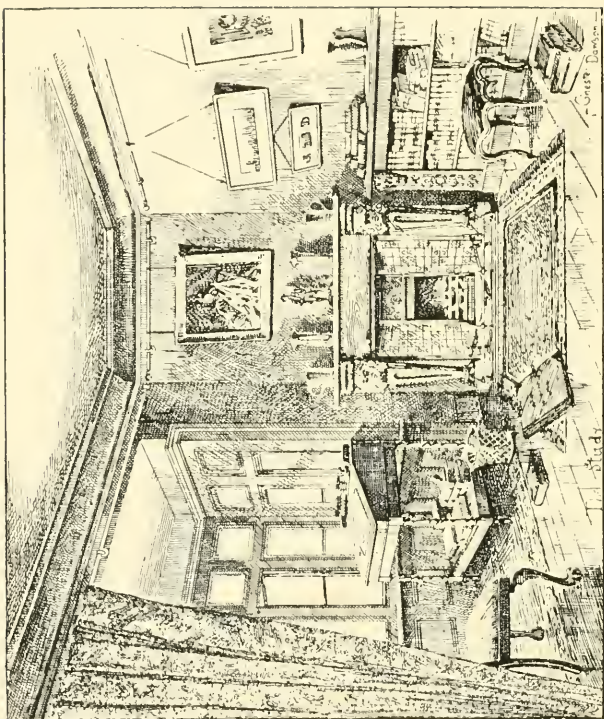
There was a chaotic garden, and woods beyond, beautiful in their autumn tints, which caused the

spot to be called by the romantic name of "Golden Lands." But that first week I do not think we at all appreciated the situation, unless it was my brother Harry: he made a joke of everything, especially of screwing up the front and back doors at night; for there was not a lock, bolt, or bar, let alone a shutter; some of the windows had fastenings, and that was all.

Emma Roberts, the cook, was a thoroughly capable woman, but I shall never forget her face when she saw the state of the kitchen and scullery, and found there was no sink. I was much more concerned at the water oozing out of the walls, for I did not know what effect it would have on my father's health.

Roberts and I made the house quite habitable in a week, and Harry worried the workmen to such good purpose that we had the kitchen stove and floor; but the chimney always smoked, and to such an extent, that it caused the death of a favourite jackdaw which Harry had reared at school.

This bird used to fly about Bloomsbury Square; it made friends with the porters at the British Museum, and was once made tipsy by Sir Henry Irving giving it champagne in a teaspoon; it was



a very great pet, and so much admired by Charles Reade that my brother reared him one and took it to him at Knightsbridge, the author having asked him to do so.

At Christmas we moved into "Fair-Home," but we lived in almost as much muddle as at Golden Lands. My father wanted "solid French papers." These papers had to be made, and our dining-room walls were covered till the spring with *The Morning Post*. My father was so anxious to see the house finished, he would have chosen any papers the decorator had, but my mother would not hear of it; for in their early married life, their house in Wharton Street wanting redecorating, the landlord sent two papers for the dining-room for them to choose from. People were not so liberal in giving their tenants a choice in those days, and papers were dark and not remarkable for beauty. When the paper chosen was up, neither my father nor mother liked it, but each thought the other did. Some three months passed, when my mother exclaimed one day, "I can't think why you chose this paper." "I thought you preferred it," said my father. "*I liked the other better.*" "So did I," said my father, and then they both laughed and had the obnoxious paper removed at their own expense.

CHAPTER XVI

Letters from Mrs. Norton—R. B. Sheridan—A prophet in his own village—A book from Austin Dobson—*The Pictorial World*—Charles Kingsley wishes my father to be ordained—“The Better Self”—News of Canon Kingsley’s death—“Far from the Madding Crowd.”

My father carried on a large correspondence, literary and otherwise. Like all invalids who are very much confined to the house, he delighted in hearing from his friends. Christmas and the New Year were the times for renewing old friendships, and these were certain to bring a shoal of letters. But at the beginning of 1873 the letters were mostly records of illness and misfortune.

On 2nd January there is this entry in the diary : “Sad letter from William and Georgy announcing probable death of Leonard ;” and the next day : “Leonard Friswell dies, at a quarter past six.” My cousin was only about one-and-twenty, a most promising young man, the youngest son of my father’s eldest brother ; he had been ill for two or three years, and his death was a great sorrow to his parents and friends. Then, on the 6th,

Mrs. Norton wrote from Frampton Court as follows :—

“GOOD HENCHMAN,—I was touched by your remembrances of me and your pretty card of good wishes! I do not know what 1873 may bring forth, but it cannot be more comfortless *or useless* than 1872, as far as I and my future are concerned. I have been ill nearly all the year, and away in France and Germany, and at an utter *standstill* as far as any intellectual exertion.”

Then she speaks of her grandson, whom we knew, and continues :—

“How are your boys getting on? How is the alchymist who went to look at the stars like a Chaldean seer?¹ . . . When I return to London I hope to see you all. Kindest remembrances to the wife and Marie Antoinette.²—Yours always.”

The diary goes on: “The year begins badly, but with better health. Troubled about the building of Fair-Home, but determined to be of good spirits and more cheerful.”

His health was a very serious trouble, but he was good-tempered, hopeful, and cheerful in spite of the amount of small worries that fell thick and

¹ My eldest brother, who went to India with Norman Lockyer for the Government.

² Mrs. Norton's name for me. I was said to be so like that unfortunate woman that I have heard people remark it in the street.

fast upon him. The builder of Fair-Home became a bankrupt, and there was difficulty in getting the house finished, and much trouble and annoyance, which would not have mattered to a strong man, but was serious in his case. But he had the art of turning most things into a joke, and he used to laugh and call himself and my mother "Mr. and Mrs. Job," just as he used to say, in the Great Russell Street days, when the postman knocked particularly loudly, "Run, Harry, there's my *baronetcy*," and we children for years expected fame and fortune to arrive in one of those letters.

On the 9th of January Napoleon III. died at Chislehurst, and on the 14th my father went to the funeral. He was not an admirer of Napoleon, and agreed with Canon Kingsley, who sided with the Germans. In a letter to my father, speaking of the war, he (the Canon) said: "It is the triumph of morality and 'The Gentle Life.'"

On the 30th of January my father writes to Mr. Izard in his usual cheerful spirits:—

"FAIR-HOME, BEXLEY HEATH,
"KENT, Jan. 30, 1873.

"DEAR OLD MAN!—'Why art thou silent, thou voice of my heart?' Has the little woman combed the last bit of spirit out of you with a three-legged stool? Has your

last bargain turned out bad, the bank broke, or the infant got measles?

"What is the matter? How, when, where? Have you been arrested for the Coram Street affair, and won't they let you out on bail? or have you been lecturing for the Claimant?"

"Come down and explain—when they let you out. Sunshine glorious, daffodils, violets, primroses, peeping and budding into Beauty—with big B's. Fresh air and fresh ideas, which you much want. We will provide a canoe to carry you across the brook. Can entertain the missus. R.S.V.P. VON FRITZWELL."

My father must have missed the friends that used to drop in so often in Great Russell Street. Not that he ever complained of dulness, but he often used to say, "I wonder how so-and-so is getting on. I wish he would run down and see me." But it is curious how very soon your friends cease to come and see you if there is a railway journey and a walk, and we were a mile and a half from the station, a most picturesque walk, but nearly all uphill.

Mr. Charles Reade, writing at this time about some literary question, ends his letter thus:—

"I hope your removal from town has benefited your health. But the result is, one sees nothing of you now."

And so it was with almost everybody—they said how much they missed him.

My father was a member of The Arts as well as The Savage and Urban Clubs. He continued his membership, but he seldom went to any of them, nor did we go to the theatre unless we stayed the night in town; he was too delicate.

The inhabitants of Bexley Heath consisted at that time of middle-aged ladies and gentlemen who had avoided the married state; retired military men who grumbled at everything, and young married people wrapped up in themselves and their children. My eldest brother was with Mr. Norman Lockyer, and lived in town; and we at Bexley Heath found that "happy village" deadly dull at times. Fortunately we were all fond of reading, writing, painting, music, and gardening, and we were much amused at the people who called upon us. Their ideas of artists, authors, and actors were of the most crude kind; they seemed to have the old-fashioned notion that they were "vagabonds." Like most of those who live in a narrow sphere, they understood little outside it, and they told some preposterous stories and made some wonderful statements.

I remember one of the autocrats of the Heath calling and making some astounding statements

about William Morris, who had built a house in the place. His chief offence appeared to be having tea-parties on Sunday. I was generally silent, but on this occasion I was roused, and was soon in dire disgrace for taking up the cudgels on his behalf; I said plainly, I thought Bexley Heath should be proud that such a man as the author of "The Earthly Paradise" had lived there. I was promptly told "little girls should be seen and not heard;" this was adding insult to injury, for I was by no means a little girl.

I can remember well my father's amused smile, which grew into a laugh, when the lady asserted that she "had heard, and felt sure it must be true, that Mrs. Morris had been in a circus; no one could ride and manage a horse so beautifully but a performer."

My father explained that this rumour was quite false, there was absolutely no truth in it; but the autocrat refused to be convinced, and said, "That was not the worst: the man was quite a heathen; for it was well known down there that he was married in his drawing-room, the ceremony being of a most curious character, and afterwards he had it painted upon the wall."

The house Morris built was called the Red

House. It stood in a quiet country road; was surrounded by a very high red-brick wall, in which were large high wooden gates. The garden was not very extensive and was very prim, the trees in some instances being cut into shapes. The house itself was substantial, but decidedly gloomy-looking; the windows were long and narrow, the roof very steep, and the chimneys charming. Inside it looked cold and gloomy, but then it was empty. The rooms were lofty, the windows so high that no one could see out of them; there were red-brick hoods over the fireplaces, which consisted of a hearth and dogs; there were no stoves. In the drawing-room was a musicians' gallery, and round the walls were frescoes, one representing a mediæval marriage. This was the picture which had caused such silly stories to be spread abroad, most likely by ignorant servants; but that people with any education or sense should repeat them was astounding.

Bexley Heath was out of the world—not that it considered itself so, but the long walk from the station rendered it rather difficult of access, and this isolation accounted, I presume, for the curiously narrow-minded, conceited, ignorant, and, at the same time, patronising manner of some of the

people. I do not allude to the lower class, they are much the same anywhere, and certainly there were many very worthy people amongst them. But it was as difficult to understand the ill-natured gossiping propensities of the gentry as their want of taste. At this time æsthetic papers, varnished boards, and square carpets were not yet universal; but, long before they were the fashion, our house was so furnished, nor would my father have gas, as he said it spoilt pictures and curtains.

There was very little congenial society, and except when friends were staying in the house, or J. G. Wood came over from Belvedere or his brother from Bostal Heath, or a Mr. Chretien and Gilbert Wood, our near neighbours, dropped in, it was for a man of my father's temperament a social banishment which he must have felt keenly, though he never complained. Books, how he revelled in them! How eagerly we opened the great parcels that arrived every month for review in *The Publishers' Circular*. My mother continually urged my father to give up this work, as she thought he might be writing better things or resting; but he used to say quite pathetically, "But then I shan't see all the new books," and he had so few pleasures now, that we would have

done anything to make his life as happy as possible.

It was early in 1874 that he received a small volume, which he had reviewed in the previous year, and had very much admired, and now it was sent to him by the author. I have never had the honour of seeing Austin Dobson, but I have often thought I should like to thank him for the pleasure he gave my father when he sent him "Vignettes in Rhyme" and wrote in it, "To the author of 'Frances Spira' and 'The Gentle Life,' from A. D.," adding this verse:—

"Flowers that were plucked but yesterday,
Scents that an ancient memory stirs,
Fresh fragrances and dear decay,
Roses and musk and lavender."

The author, when he sent his book, wrote:—

"I have known 'Frances Spira' since its year of issue. I have just re-read 'In Church,' which, I remember, amused me exceedingly. But I should wrong your graver muse if I confined myself to that sprightly little interlude. . . . I am pleased that you are able to use the little piece I send. Perhaps before you send me a proof I may, as my way is, improve a line or two."

I fancy this was a piece called "*Dora versus Rose*," and that it appeared in *The Pictorial World*. Mr. Collingridge, the proprietor of *The City Press*,

had proposed starting a pictorial paper for three-pence, and had asked my father to edit it. My father did not do so, but he helped to arrange and start it, and gave it its name. My mother begged him not to undertake more work ; but he did not think it would hurt him, or that he should have very much to do. The first number was very good, and the pictures charming ; but, much to my father's disgust, an old block or a badly produced sketch would be slipped in, and no one seemed to know how. My father could not, and never did, edit the paper ; but it seems to have been thoroughly mismanaged, and, though it lingered on for about twenty years, it never was successful. But in the early spring of 1874 we all hoped great things from *The Pictorial*, and Austin Dobson, writing to thank my father for a notice, says he hopes *The Pictorial World* is flourishing. "I think," he says, "I detected your hand in a quotation the other day. I cannot understand how you can do so much work and find time to be so kind."

He did too much, and his health broke down again. In August he was very ill ; on Friday, 14th, the record in the diary is :—"Still very ill, in bed ; very bad, but still at work." He did his

Family Herald and *Publishers' Circular* work propped up in bed. He writes :—

“BEDS—IN KENT, *Sept.* 25, 1874.

“MY DEAR IZARD,—Thanks for your good, kind letter ; but I cannot lay the flattering unction to my soul that I have been anything but an unprofitable servant. I hope I have tried to do good, but, like all of us, in a weak way. We must put up with these chastisements, only I am afraid some of us get a good deal more than others. ‘Twas ever thus in childhood’s hour.’ At school, old Fowler says I used to get more strappings than any two boys. I was as good as any, and yet always up for punishment. Such is fate !

“Then, look at my losing two fortunes besides old ——’s money. It’s near seven weeks of it now, old fellow, and they say I begin to mend ‘slowly.’ I wonder shall I ever mend at all. I am dreadfully tired of life : I don’t want any recompense : I only pray for pardon, and then to drop into the jaws of darkness and cease from being. I have found this world ‘such a suck and a sell’ that I dread further trial, and am not good enough for the next.

“Good-bye. Health and happiness to you and yours. All people very kind here as elsewhere.—Yours always.”

Another letter, written a fortnight later, is from Charles Kingsley, and runs :—

“WESTMINSTER ABBEY, *Oct.* 7, 1874.

“I have been away, and only saw your letter yesterday. I am too poorly to preach for your church¹ or any other.

¹ A church was being built at Bexley Heath.

But I am most anxious about your account of yourself; and you wish for a pension. I will do all I can. I should have thought you would have no difficulty. In your place I should get some one who knows me most intimately and at first hand to draw up a paper. Of course I would sign and get it signed. There can be no reason why you should not mention the former memorial, if you have preserved it and the names of those who signed it. I would gladly run down and talk the matter over; but I am just recovering from a severe illness, or rather from two.

"Pray keep up heart. Help and friends are sure to turn up in this strangely well-made world just when least expected.—Believe me, ever yours sincerely."

Here is another letter to Mr. Izard, who had evidently been ill:—

"BEDROOM AS BEFORE,

"Oct. 15, 1874.

"DEAR IZARD,—What cheer ho! my hearty! 'Are you a British tar or a negro serenader,' that you are steering into Bugsby's Hole and straight for Davy Jones' locker? Here you have a bit of a cold, and you are as dull as I am after *nine weeks'* imprisonment and a hole in my lung.

"Well, old comrade, I am getting on slowly; sometimes whole days in bed, sometimes on the sofa. But then, how much more do others suffer? We are in the upper part of the world yet, although sick and troubled. I am troubled for many, and obliged to work half-time; but, as Canon Kingsley says, some one will be sure to turn up in this curiously 'well-made world.' That's all the consolation I get from my friend the Canon; but he means well. Very sorry to hear that you are troubled, but it will pass off.

Old Stefano and his son came down to-day, jolly and merry, after eight weeks in Switzerland. I shall see that *when in the spirit!!*

"We have splendid weather here, and are happy, though prisoners.

"Let us know how you are, and love God and be grateful to Him for all His mercies, and chiefly for the true faith. If not *well* now, it will be *well* hereafter.—
Yours always, J. HAIN FRISWELL."

Then Canon Kingsley again writes as follows:—

"THE CLOISTERS,
"WESTMINSTER, Nov. 6, 1874.

"I am much concerned at what you say of your health. As for taking orders, whom should we more gladly welcome into the priesthood than the author of 'The Gentle Life'? If I can be of the least use to you, let me know. And on one thing I insist: that if you do present yourself for ordination, I may, if I am eligible, have the honour of being one of the sponsors to your testimonials.

"Ever yours. I should be glad to see you here, where I shall be till December first."

My father never presented himself for ordination; he was too ill. I am sure the excitement of preaching would have been bad for him, but Canon Kingsley was most anxious he should be ordained.

The next letter is from my father to Mr. Wm. Wiseman, who very kindly used to help him with

his work on *The Publishers' Circular* when he could not come to town; and Moy Thomas was also kind, and would write the article when my father was too ill.

“FAIR-HOME, Nov. 23, 1874.

“MY DEAR WISEMAN,—I have heard of you, but not seen you for some time. How are you? Many thanks for your continued kindness as to the italic notes. Would that I could come up and save you the trouble. . . .

“Instead of being dead, I am alive and much better. ‘It is the Lord’s doing, but it is wonderful in our eyes.’ Two good friends, taken since my illness, have died, and I am left standing. Adieu. Think of these things as you grow old and serious.

‘This world is full of care and trouble,
Whether you go it single or double.’—*Billings*.”

In 1875 “The Better Self” was published, and as he was reading the last proofs we heard of Canon Kingsley’s severe illness, and in a few days of his death. This upset and saddened my father very much, especially as the Canon died of the same disease.

For a time my father’s health was much better, and on March 10, 1875, he writes to Mr. Izard:—

“Not quite restored; never shall be, but wonderfully better. . . .

“Shall be very glad to see you and the ‘missus’ when-

ever you like to come. You ought to get out of London, and add to your life. Since I have been taken ill I have lost five-and-twenty friends and acquaintances. Poor dear Birnie Phillip, Watts Phillips, Canon Kingsley, Sir Arthur Helps, John Timbs, and my nephews, William and Leonard Friswell, amongst the number. 'The sword of winter cold and keen' slew a great number, but London atmosphere and worry slew more."

To Mr. Sheridan he speaks of being "wondrously well."

"This," says Mr. Sheridan, "is good news to your many friends.

"If the summer does not set in with its usual severity, I hope you will be able to pick up more strength and better health. . . . I have not read 'Far from the Madding Crowd' yet, but will do so without delay. I have seen extracts, and thought the dialogue I read deserving the praise you give the characters."

My father was very delighted with the novel, and used to read us extracts and to quote "Joseph Poorgrass" continually. In spite of his bad health, I think he was very happy in his pretty, bright house and picturesque old garden, where the nightingale sang in the cherry-tree on the lawn, and all about him were the objects and the people he most loved.

CHAPTER XVII

Some quotations from an obituary notice—An old and new church—How some well-known Italian singers were entertained—The tenor and the bath-chair—Letter to Mrs. Kingsley—A letter from Lady Lytton—Down at Woburn—A letter from Sidney Grundy.

IN *The Pictorial World* my father wrote an obituary notice, full of feeling and admiration for Kingsley's life and work. Everything he said of Kingsley might have been said of himself. In thought and feeling the two men were very much alike. They had the same high aims, the same noble ideal of life, and almost the same struggle to live; for they were not rich men in this world's goods, and there were many dependent upon their constant exertion.

In spite of adverse fortune and continual ill-health, my father kept his bright spirits to the last. He always said that "God liked cheerfulness," and that, "like any other virtue, it could be cultivated;" that "the brave, good man may determine to take things as they come, but he tries to make them come right;" and that "too much melancholy is as bad or worse than too much

lightness." He was averse to anything that indisposed people to action, and indulgence in sorrow or melancholy does this; therefore he looked upon it as a passion that should be striven against, as it has in it, if indulged in, "much of laziness and self-gratification." He was, of course, well aware that the melancholy temperament carries its own consolation, that there are people who really enjoy bad health, and like to be thought martyrs, and on them he was most severe. He always looked for the good in mankind, and could never be made to believe that the world was so wicked as many good people represent it. Yet no one deplored more than himself the fact that England was growing too rich, and that in art, religion, literature, and worship there was a tendency to histrionism; and anything like acting, except on the stage, he hated. In his notice on Kingsley he says:—

"He was so true to himself, and laboured so heartily and earnestly to raise his readers to a manly self-reliance, that nothing hurt him so much as the tendency of young men to the teachings of that Church which crushes and subdues and loves not self-help."

This, I am sure, was my father's opinion as well as Kingsley's. He was strongly opposed to the

teachings of the Church of Rome, and would very much have deplored the strong hold it is making in England at the present time. He was essentially a manly man, and approved of muscular Christianity; both he and Kingsley tried to teach Faith, Hope, Charity, Self-restraint, and Duty, and, as is usually the case, they were often reviled for their pains. The first, to quote *The Sunday Times*, was *one of the best abused of men*. The second was shrieked at by several hysterical reviewers as "Chartist-parson" and "soldier-priest." Where are our soldier-priests now? We are in great need of them.

In the "Life of Kingsley" there is a fine little touch where we are told that when he was made chaplain to the Queen, though he still waged war against bigotry, intolerance, and ignorance, and was himself unchanged, "the attacks on him from outside grew less frequent and less bitter." This was, of course, the way of the world, and to be expected; but to men like Kingsley and my father it must have been very mortifying. They both lived too much with their hearts. Kingsley could not read certain books (one was "Uncle Tom's Cabin"), because they worked upon his feelings too much. My father was not so sensitive, but work

and feeling told upon him more than on most men, and helped to engender that treacherous disease that beats down the hearts of men, and to which any emotion is food and life.

But when my father wrote his obituary notice of Kingsley he was himself very well. The Canon had written only a few weeks before his death, my father being then very ill, "Don't despair, you will recover," and it seemed as if the prophecy was true, for country air and quiet had improved his health in a wonderful way. He was no sooner better than he was anxious to help and please others. He was always looking round to see what good he could do, and he soon found work ready for his hand.

The old church at Bexley Heath was evidently the original of those cast in plaster and carried about on trays by Italian boys. It was cold, bare, mean and ugly ; all it wanted when lighted was a coat of whitewash outside, and you could not have told it from the plaster cast lighted with a candle end. None of the buildings were old on the Heath, that is, not over forty years. The church was called old in contradistinction to that we were building, which for beauty of design might have been designated a small cathedral.

The vicar was a good and sincere man, but he did not look a happy one. There was not much muscular Christianity about him, he vacillated between Ritualism and Evangelicalism. He dressed like a Romish priest, and would have liked an ornate service. The whitewashed walls and narrow pews of the old church must have offended his taste; and the ignorant, stiff-necked obstinacy and generally carping spirit of the autocrats in his congregation I am sure wrung his heart. He often came to see my father when he was very ill, and he would read prayers in the same monotonous, melancholy voice he affected in church, and he administered the sacrament as if there was only death and despair to follow. He looked like a man who had lost all hope in life, and had nothing but endurance left; yet he had one pleasure, that was the building of the new church. To praise it would bring a faint gleam of light to his eyes, the ghost of a smile to his lips.

My father always called him "poor Mr. —," and seemed to pity him, and he did all he could to advance the building of the church, not only by a donation, but in many other ways. He had asked Kingsley to preach, but when the Canon wrote that he was "too ill," my father suggested an art loan

exhibition at the hall, the profits to go to the church. The vicar was alarmed, and threw cold water on the plan ; the autocrats, who sneered at most things, would be up in arms at an art exhibition—fancy paying to look at wicked old masters, at weapons of war or torture, and then building a church and expecting it to prosper ; a bazaar was iniquitous enough, but an exhibition ! Some one mildly suggested that it would teach something to the young people. “Yes, flirting,” came the prompt reply. “There is art in that,” was the answer. The autocrats thought the plaster-cast church good enough ; altar-cloths, lecterns, and coloured windows were popish. Excepting the view, which was not made by man, beauty was thrust out of Bexley Heath. It must have been regarded as a snare of the devil ; for the buildings, the way the roads were laid out, and the dress of the inhabitants, could not well be outdone in ugliness.

So my father’s proposal fell to the ground, as far as the church was concerned ; but it had leaked out, and certain gentlemen who had shares in the public hall waited upon him and asked him to get up a loan exhibition for them. The hall was a pretty, bright place inside ; but the young people

(there were very few) dared not dance, and concerts were not patronised. It was said the autocrats had forbidden the vicar to countenance any concerts but those given by the choral society, and as no person under forty was eligible for that, the performances can be more easily imagined than described, and the audiences, as may be supposed, were very select.

Certain good people who took an interest in the place tried, by bringing down artists in acting or singing, to please the public; but these entertainments were generally attended by ill-luck, often in the shape of a wet night. I remember one very amusing and never-to-be-forgotten instance which ended satisfactorily, but which for my father's power of setting things straight under trying circumstances might have ended very differently.

A most wonderful concert was advertised. Some leading Italian artists having consented to give their services, the committee worked with a will to fill the hall. It had been arranged that the singers should be received and entertained at the house of Mr. D——, who was not only eccentric himself, but whose wife, invalided in consequence of a shock from a railway accident, had allowed the control of her household to fall into the hands of her old

servants, who were accustomed to arrange things as they liked.

The house was large, old-fashioned, and had fine grounds, and Mr. D—— was fond of entertaining in a happy-go-lucky manner ; so that dinners or garden-parties were arranged at the last moment, with hasty and extravagant hospitality, and nearly always some amusing oversight of important details. Mr. D—— was delighted to receive the celebrities of the evening, had provided an excellent dinner, and was amusing his guests with some of his funniest anecdotes, when he became conscious of the sound of a steady downpour. Only then did it occur to him that the dismissal of his coachman, and the sending of his horses to a neighbouring farm, which had taken place a day or two before, might cause him some difficulty in getting his guests to the hall. He quietly whispered to the maid to send the gardener into the village for any available cabs or flys, only to find that they had been all engaged by the audience.

The station was two miles away, and the chance of getting a conveyance there was given up on account of time. When the singers heard the state of affairs they looked at their host with despair in their faces ; and he wished he had hired the station

omnibus, or that he kept a boot-shop and could deal out goloshes and hobnails.

The tenor said "if he wetted his feet it would ruin his voice."

The soprano was almost in tears.

The contralto declared "she was very subject to sore throats."

Mr. D—— gazed at them helplessly, and when the parlour-maid in a stage aside said "Can the gardener speak to you, sir?" he was glad to escape from the room. On interviewing the man he found he had got out and dusted, not the wheelbarrow, but his mistress's old bath-chair; he could, he said, "take the ladies round to the 'all one by one." The tenor availed himself of this conveyance gladly; but it was a feat of all the persuasive arts to induce Signora ——, a magnificent being of five feet seven, a contralto of European reputation, with a dress in itself an artistic creation, to allow herself to be rolled, swathed, compressed, and packed into a bath-chair, and to be dragged through rain, mud, and darkness by a gardener and his underling over half a mile along a country road. Mr. D—— achieved this with all the ladies of the party, but he always admitted that it was a far greater triumph to have received them after the journey, which my

father did at the hall, and to get each ruffled and depressed sufferer to take a humorous view of the situation.

The reception rooms were made very comfortable, and my father's cheerfulness and funny stories of similar catastrophes, which he of course invented, soon produced a spirit of *bon camaraderie*. The concert began *only* about forty minutes late, but he knew well how to keep an audience in a good temper, and the singers acquitted themselves to perfection. They certainly allowed long intervals to elapse between each item of the programme, but the first sign of disapprobation was allayed by my father's explanation that "*true* artists would not consent to hurry one achievement on the top of another, but insisted on a decent interval as necessary for proper appreciation," and so the concert proceeded in a leisurely manner till midnight, much to the satisfaction of everybody ; the evening was a success unusual in rural England. The last train was gone, but the artists thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and finished the night at Mr. D——'s, who gave them an excellent supper, and sent them to town in a comfortable omnibus at five in the morning.

An entertainment like the foregoing could not

happen often ; the hall languished, and the shareholders came to my father for help. A committee was formed, circulars printed and sent round, and my father drove out and called at most of the country seats. The result was pictures, china, and curios of every description. Ladies and gentlemen assisted in arranging screens for water-colours and miniatures, cases for china, &c. My father superintended it all, and we had so good an exhibition that he had many letters from different places asking how to get up such a one. A well-known artist hung all our pictures, and they proved a goodly collection. The wicked old masters were represented by Gainsborough, Romney, Sir Peter Lely, and others ; there was a fine landscape by Richard Wilson, lent by Sir Charles Mills ; my father sent pictures, miniatures, autographs, and John Hampden's sword ; the Rev. J. G. Wood lent some curious weapons and musical instruments, and a Mr. Dollman a fine piece of statuary, Bailey's " Eve at the Fountain," which I mention because it was the cause of a rather amusing story.

My father, in spite of a heavy insurance, a night-watchman, and several attendants, felt the responsibility of so many valuable things, and thought some of the Friswell family should always

be there. So we took it in turns, and one day I was doing "show-woman" to two young ladies; for, though there were catalogues, we generally went round with people. On this occasion we had looked at nearly everything, when we paused close to "Eve at the Fountain." I remarked how beautiful it was; there was a pause, and then one sister said boldly, "We don't like that sort of thing." "You don't like statuary?" said I. "It's not that; we don't mind busts and things—but—well, why are painters so fond of painting figures without clothes?" "Are they?" I asked. "Look at the old masters," said the other sister. "I suppose *you* admire *them*?" she added. I owned that I did. "*We* don't; *we* call the *old masters disgusting old beasts*," returned the first speaker. My father overheard this dialogue, and was very much amused.

He was very well at the end of 1874, and in 1875 writes to my uncle, B. Dawson, B.A., who assisted in the translation of "Like Unto Christ":—

"March 1, 1875.

"This straggly cyclamen, drawn from the round, you may tell Chess, is indicative of our feelings. From our thermometers, we are perhaps not so cold as you, but the prospect is beastly. 'Febuere,' as dear Chaucer says,

behaved in a most atrocious way ; though, thank God, I am better—nay, very well indeed. Still I am ‘friz’—but so I was ‘borned.’ I am pleased with your letter, sir ; the old man, said I, ‘is coming out.’ I was glad you laid a pitfall at the door of D——. Between ourselves, he is an ‘awesome fule,’ and the paper is a dull literary performance as ever gave an author with sound literary intentions the headache. But what then—the age demands it ; and you know Friswell’s theory, that, as a rule, directly a man becomes an editor, with a few notable exceptions, he is struck with judicial blindness, dense dulness, stupendous stupidity, feeble folly, immeasurable maundering, and ‘orrid hincapacity. There’s my opinion, siree ! Glad to be in the same pages with you. I seldom or ever write to the paper ; you know it attacked *Familiar Words*, and the editor had as neat a drubbing from Professor Morley and myself as ever any fellow had. Hence he hates and respects me, but he’s an ass to keep anything of yours out. The ‘puff,’ as you call it, is neat, but not more than ‘our book’¹ deserves. I mean to get the Princess of Wales’ permission to dedicate the next edition to her. You know it is her favourite.

“Old Glacies has come in again, and struck up a bargain with Jupiter Pluvius ; together they as-salt the earth, but it’s snow-go over and over again with them. Our roses are budding, and the hedges are pruned and loaded ready to shoot. The birds that paired on Valentine’s Day are now repairing their ruined constitutions, owing to sitting up to serenade their mates. A sparrow on the tower battlements has got the screwmatics in endcavouring to alter the weather-cock, a vane proceeding on his part. The east

¹ “Like unto Christ.”

wind gives us no quarter ; rather, change of quarter, ses l.—
Yours always truly.

“*N.B.*—No pun is intended on sickly-men cas why we are not sickly—we are in training for the Arctic expedition.”

At the beginning of 1876 Mrs. Kingsley wrote asking for some of her husband's letters. This is my father's answer :—

“*Feb.* 23, 1876.

“DEAR MRS. KINGSLEY,—I have the melancholy pleasure of sending you six letters of the great and good man whose life you are writing. Two or more of them are of interest—one on preaching a bit of ‘Euphues’ at Sandringham ; the other as showing his attachment to the Athanasian Creed, and his kindness towards me in wishing me to take orders in the Church. The others are characteristic, and may be of service. I send these at once, although I am miserably out of sorts—‘out of all sorts,’ as a village confectioner would say ; for the sweets of life are but little, and in ‘ill-health comforts follow suite.’ I can only cheer myself up with a pun, having, as a friend said once, ‘spat more blood and made more puns than Tom Hood.’

“I have written to the office for the number of *The Pictorial World* with the little article you want. It was very much admired and quoted, and I had letters about it. If any part of it will serve you, pray use it. There is yet another letter, with Kingsley's opinion on the Franco-German war, quite on the side of the Germans, when all beside he and I were French. This being important, is mislaid. My wife has spent three days looking for it, and

will spend more. He wrote some beautiful verse for me for *Once a Week*, on the war; that might be quoted or interwoven in your book.—Very truly yours.”

My father was at this time writing some leaders in *The Morning Post*, and here I quote a letter from Sir William Hardman, who writes to thank him for an autograph and portrait of H. M. Stanley, which my father sent to Lady Hardman. He had made Stanley’s acquaintance in 1871, when “How I found Livingstone” was published, Messrs. Low & Co. having sent it in manuscript to my father for his opinion.

“I like your leader on M——’s maunderings *vastly*.” Sir William’s letter goes on: “I know M——; a soured, disappointed man, who, an utter aristocrat at heart, is weary of the world because he is *only* an editor. If any one would leave him £30,000 he would blossom into a full-blown swell. . . . I have been busy dealing justice to-day. I had a series of aggravated assaults on the police, and have put away for lengthened periods divers notorious ruffians of South London. Unlike poor Justice Wills, these sentences do not in any way disturb my rest; ‘a man can but act according to his lights!’ ”

My father carried on a literary correspondence with several people. One was the Rev. Edward Bradley (Cuthbert Bede); another, Lady Lytton, an unfortunately unhappy woman, who generally

signed herself "Rosina Lytton." Alas! some of her letters are so interesting and clever, I wish I could publish them. Her remarks are both apt and true as regards society and literature. But I only quote one, which refers merely to some remarks of my father's:—

"I am really very sorry to hear that you have again been so ill, more especially as I can, alas! only administer the usual Tishbite and Temenite consolation of 'friends' to you, and say that there are worse ills in that horrible wallet that Fate straps on our back than being ill, for in that case one may get well. As for the lion's share of this world's prosperity—well, of course the scoundrelocracy have it; and their antipodes have no right either to be surprised or to complain at not having it; for would you, or any other honest man or woman, pay the ruinous price they do for it? Yet, hang them—as Calcraft done—those peas they cram into one's shoes are terribly hard and woeful impedimenta; and the worst of it is, the wretches take care not to leave us a single vessel that will hold water wherein to boil them to a comfortable softness, while we are boiling over the *Seava indignatio* and *nil admirari* which constitutes the intermitting fever of experience. Your two mottoes, 'Patience' and 'Faith,' make capital seven-leagued boots for the rough, uphill journey of life; only, the worst of it is, that Patience is always made for the left foot, and having more strain upon it, is apt to wear out and be patched by that world-old facing-both-ways firm of Expediency and Compromise; and though, thank God, Faith never does wear out, still, we have to limp on one foot while its fellow is undergoing these periodical repairs.

“‘Am I writing anything?’ Well—only committing suicide, that is, attempting my life. Ho! for my ‘strong language,’ for which I have been so larded and grilled; I can only retort with Electra in the Iambics of Sophocles, ‘You do the deeds—and your unholy deeds find me the words.’ . . . I am sure your Fair-Home, your two cottages made into a castle, must be charming, and I long to see it, and to shake hands with the author of the admirable essays I have so long admired. . . . I long for you and Mrs. Friswell to see my hawthorns in May, the only things I have worth seeing; for, despite the laudations of my friends, my rooms, except the bedrooms, are wretchedly small, which I hate, and feel about as comfortable as an elephant would in a glove-box. But I know how the impression is produced on them: like all old women I abound in maxims, two of which are, that the only luxury within the reach of poverty is order and neatness, and the only elegance cleanliness; and they twain I have fused into an axiom—‘*Que si le style c’est l’homme, la maison c’est la femme,*’ and therefore maintain that drop down a gentlewoman into a barn, and she will soon permeate it with an air of comfort and *bien être*; whereas, place a vulgar woman, or what is now called ‘a lady,’ in a palace, and, despite all its luxury and magnificence, she will contrive to vulgarise it. Pray remember, that not only are good people scarce, but that they are rapidly becoming scarcer every day; so pray get well soon, in the interests of your myriads of readers and that of yours always most truly,

ROSINA LYTTON.”

In June my father, mother, and my brother Harry went to Woburn, and visited Aspley Guise—my father wishing to see once more the

old school where three generations of Friswells had been educated. From there he wrote to me as follows:—

“*Monday, June 10, 1876.*”

“MY DEAR ‘LAWLER,’—Here we are, very comfortable, and really enjoying ourselves. The Pains gave us dinner and tea yesterday, and to-morrow we go to Jim Pain’s, and meet with other schoolfellows; we go to lunch at one. They are homely, gentle, quiet people. You would like this muchly, and we only wish you were here. All is so quiet; the very peasants are like gentlemen and gentle-shepherds. Mamma and Harry have wandered through the Park, which is beautiful. This morning Henry Blackburn came in, and for a few moments stayed with us. He was off to Woburn Sands. I chaffed him as he drove off in a kind of rough cart with a lot of luggage. He gasped out, ‘Well, this *used* to be a quiet place.’ He got my monkey up by wanting to know what business *we had* down here! We must come up on Wednesday, as there is the *P. C.* to do. Unpack the parcel, and write out titles, and review what books you can. I will do a leader or so down here if I can. I mean to leave this for Harry to finish; I don’t think he has written yet? Was Dick with you? There are the children of Nelly Pain, who was killed at Cawnpore, here. Harry has put on a few degrees of colour. I suppose there is no news.—Always believe me, dear ‘Lawler,’ your affectionate father,

“J. HAIN FRISWELL.

“Love and kind remembrances and kind words to all who are at home and all whom you see. It seems a long time since we left Fair-Home and came to this ‘sleepy hollow.’—Yours ever truly.”

Mr. Gladstone wrote to him in this year, thanking him for an article he had written on the Royal Titles Bill; and a letter came to him from a young writer, Mr. Sydney Grundy, in which he sends my father some books. He says:—

“25 CECIL STREET, STRAND,
“June 15, 1876.

“MY DEAR SIR,—Will you do one who many years ago was a frequent contributor to your paper the favour of accepting the accompanying volumes? If you honour me by reading them, I know you will find in them much that you will strongly disapprove—possibly, a few things that will even give you pain; but I ask you kindly to accept them in the spirit in which they are sent.

“Some years ago I had the pleasure of expressing in a Manchester paper (*The Sphinx*) my appreciation of your work in connection with *The Family Herald*; and I send these volumes in renewed recognition of the pleasure and profit which I have always derived from the labours of your pen, even when I could not altogether follow it. I am a young man, both in opinions and actual conduct quite outside your sympathies; but, I hope, not quite outside them as a human being who is eager for the advancement of truth—which can only be got at by the conflict of opinion, and in the pursuit of which you have so long and earnestly and honourably laboured.—Yours sincerely,

“SYDNEY GRUNDY.”

CHAPTER XVIII

At Lymington—Congestion of the brain—A letter to Mrs. Norton on her marriage with Sir William Stirling-Maxwell—Lines to a church warden—Last letters—Last illness and death—Rest at last.

My father's health was so much improved that in 1876 we began to hope he might live for some years. He was able to leave home; for, besides his trip to Woburn, we all went to Lymington, near the New Forest. But there we had such wet weather that, excepting for a few drives in the forest, we could go nowhere; and my father grew tired of sitting in the hotel drawing-room, or wandering about the large, old-fashioned house, which was empty of visitors except ourselves. We walked about the small town, and bought china at all the old curiosity shops. My father declared "nothing happened, and that all he saw in the grass-grown streets were two dogs fighting."

We had intended crossing over to the Isle of Wight, and one never-to-be-forgotten day my brother and I started for Sandown to look for lodgings. It poured all day long, and we missed

boats and trains till we thought we should never get back to Lymington. From the hotel they had sent down to every train ; we arrived by the last, wet through. At the end of a week we left Lymington for home. Later in the year my father went to stay with Mr. Joseph Ellis, of Monks Balcome, and this was the last visit he made. But he had many friends at home, and gave one or two dinner-parties, at which he was very bright and like his old self. He was wonderfully quick at repartee, and no one saw more quickly a *mal à propos* speech, or came sooner to the rescue of a friend. I remember one instance in particular ; it was at a dinner at Fair-Home. Several very well known people were present, amongst whom was a celebrated barrister with a strongly marked face. This gentleman refused all wine, and my father noticing it, said, "Why, Clarke, you have not surely taken the pledge?" Mr. Clarke replied "that he had not signed it yet, but that for the present he was a teetotaler." Mr. Stevens, a gentleman present, who was fond of joking, remarked, looking across at the barrister, "Ah ! that accounts for it. I was quite struck by your woebegone countenance ; this teetotal business don't suit you ; the lines in your face—" "They

are water creases, and will soon disappear," struck in my father. There was a general laugh, and the conversation turned into another channel. Speaking of this anecdote to Sir Edward Clarke the other day, he told me two more, illustrating my father's quickness in punning. I give them in Sir Edward's own words:—

"Sometime in the sixties there was a giant, called Anak, being exhibited at St. James's Hall; your father and I went to see him. As we came out some friend met us, and said, 'Here, Friswell, *you* are always punning, but you can't make a pun of his name.' 'No,' said your father, 'I haven't a knack at all, man' (Anak, a tall man).

"Almost the last time I saw him," continued Sir Edward, "I went with him to a box at the Lyceum Theatre. He coughed badly, and I went out and bought some lozenges and brought them to him. 'You're too late, my boy,' said he, 'the coughing's (coffin's) passed; it was a perfect fit.'"

In 1876 he went to several dinners, notably one given by the Lord Mayor to literature. Speaking of dinners reminds me of another anecdote. Some years before, my father, who was a great admirer of Disraeli, was dining at —, and at the close of the evening he took the Viscountess Beaconsfield down to her carriage. As he did so he remarked to her, "Mr. Disraeli spoke most

eloquently to-night, and how well he is looking." The Viscountess looked up in my father's face with a very pleased expression. "Ah!" she said, "you think he looks well, *you* think him handsome. Yet people call him ugly; but he is not, he *is handsome*: they should see him asleep."

One Sunday evening at the end of September, my father frightened us all very much by fainting. My brothers were away, the servants were at church, but fortunately Mr. Gilbert Wood happened to call, and was very kind in staying with us and in telegraphing for the London doctor. This fainting fit was the beginning of an attack of congestion of the brain. He was ill for many weeks, and it was during this time that the weekly essay in *The Family Herald* was written by another hand, for the first time for nineteen years.

My mother, who was his devoted nurse, had in these latter years often been up for a week at a time; but on New Year's Eve 1876, the whole family sat up, and the doctor with us, as we thought every hour would be his last. He was conscious, but could scarcely speak. When the New Year dawned my mother and I were alone with him, and he asked us to sing one of

his favourite hymns, and said he wished to take the sacrament. The vicar came at eight o'clock and administered it to us all. My father was unable to move or speak all day, and was fed with Brand's essence and brandy. Towards evening he fell asleep, and awoke much better; the improvement continued, and in a few days he was comparatively himself again, but very weak. In February he was able to walk out, which he notes in his diary, also that "the daffodils are in bloom early."

Early in the year Mrs. Sheridan wrote telling us of Mrs. Norton's approaching marriage to Sir William Stirling-Maxwell, whom my father knew. Mrs. Norton and Sir William are "very old friends, their tastes are similar; it is a literary marriage," says Mrs. Sheridan.

My father wrote to Mrs. Norton as follows:—

"For the last time your loyal Henchman addresses you by a name you have rendered celebrated, and by which you will be known to the next ages. But what is he to say now you are to be married (as he hears) to one whom you have long regarded as a true knight? Good wishes are best in the most laconic fashion. May God grant you happiness and peace. Since the days of Shakespeare we cannot to the 'marriage of true minds admit impediment.' May all the happiness you ever wanted in

the long, slow moving years of a widowed wifehood be yours now; and as sunshine opens the hearts and multiplies the beauties and makes them lift their heads to heaven, so may this happiness bring you nearer God.

“Dear liege lady, we all wish this.”

On the 29th of March 1877 he went to London for the last time. Herkomer had written asking my father to “honour his studio with a visit,” so my brother Harry and I went up with my father and mother. For several years my father had promised to take me to Paris when he was well, and at times we used to amuse ourselves by talking of where we should go and what we should do; one thing he considered important was that I should have a French dinner. Long ago I had given up all hope of our journey coming off, but still we talked of it, and on this his last visit to town he suddenly remembered that I “had not had my French dinner yet,” so he proposed that, till we could go to Paris, I should have one in London, and accordingly we went to some celebrated café near Soho. In writing to his sister-in-law he speaks of it, and of the pictures, thus :—

“We have just returned from a French dinner and Herkomer’s pictures for the Academy; very fine ones—a portrait almost but not quite as good as Millais! You

remember, I gave him his first work on *The Censor*. We returned home after a very pleasant day. Would you had been with us."

It was rather an anxiety to go out with him now; one never knew that hemorrhage would not come on, and any attack might be the last. But he was still very cheerful and happy, and wrote to his friends in a most jocular manner. Here is a letter to Mr. Wiseman:—

"ECCLESIAE AD CUSTODEM.

(*Lines to a Ch—ch W—d—n.*)

Why so silent, lovely warden?

Dost thou scorn thy humble friend?

Come and walk about his garden

When thy weakly labours end!

How goes on the book on joking?

How are all good folks in town?

Come and tell us whilst thou'rt smoking,

Washing cups of claret down!

Come, my warden, come and cheer me,

With thy pale and dismal mug;

I'll rejoice when thou art near me,

And I'll brew of punch a jug.

"The effort of this composition is too great. Have you been ill? are you offended? Speak! I pray thee speak! Shall I send you a stamped and directed envelope? I pause for a reply. FUSBOS."

In April he wrote to Mr. Marston, the publisher:—

“How are you? what are you doing? how's business? 'et settler.' I send you this to show you what a fine colour some of your mauve ink is, how it can run deep and beautifully intense, and yet very light. I am awfully bad with a rheumatic k—k—knee! can only just hobble, . . . but my 'sperrit' is good. Come down and see us. Can you imagine greater honour—Dr. Schliemann and Mr. Gladstone will sup with the Urban Club: my club, the one I founded years ago! I expect there will be a rush for tickets.

“I want to do something this autumn and Christmas. Are you ready for 'Our Square Circle,' or would you postpone that till the autumn?”

“Our Square Circle” came out after his death, in the autumn of 1879. It is a similar book to “Other People's Windows,” and was published in two volumes. It consists of short stories, and verses joined together by a slight story. The reviewers failed to discover where one hand left off and the other began; for the book was finished by me, in fact almost all the connecting story was written by me, and that was the part nearly every reviewer took to blame or to praise, of course putting it down to my father, though I stated in my preface and on the title-page that it was finished by me. As usual, critics differ very much; one

says: "The stories are well connected by that quality which, in a novelist, is so often absent, the real scholarly depth of the author;" another accuses the writer of getting his ideas of life from Macaulay's Essays and the newspaper. I am ashamed to say I have never yet read Macaulay's Essays, nor in those days did I see much of the newspaper. To Dickens and Oliver Wendell Holmes I plead guilty—the latter is an especial favourite of mine; but in this instance I had no idea of imitating anybody but my father, and I strove and prayed to write in his style. I felt it a great undertaking to finish a book of his, especially as he was noted for his style. Had it been a continuous story, I do not think I could have done it; but I think I may take some credit to myself, and feel some triumph, when almost all the well-known papers praised it, and not one discovered where I began.

In May 1877 my father had an attack of hemorrhage, and was longer than usual getting over it. In July he was again ill; the entry in the diary is: "Still ill, but can crawl round the garden." On the 4th of September my eldest brother was married, but my father was too ill to go to the wedding. On the 18th he was asked

to the first literary At Home of the Urban Club, but he was not well enough to go, and he wrote to Mr. Izard about it as follows:—

“It is weeks since I heard from you, and I was glad to hear Mrs. Friswell read your wife’s letter. I have been very busy, and at one time very ill. On Sunday it is a year since I fell down with congestion of the brain. God’s mercies are over all His creatures, or I should not be here. The old club insisted on giving its founder a welcome on their first literary evening—such a gathering: Westland Marston in the chair, Henry Marston from a sick-bed to see me, Graves, Carpenter, Draper, Leigh, Francillon the novelist, and 120 others. Of course I was not there! sent a doctor’s certificate and Harry. He was delighted; never heard such speaking in his life, and most of it in his father’s praise. Volumes of condolence, and most eloquent letters from both Marstons,¹ &c.

“There’s wonders for you. Adoo.—Yours, quite tired out.”

All the autumn and winter he was very ill, unable for months to go up to his room, though there were very few and shallow stairs; so his bed was brought into the drawing-room—a very large room, and one he liked. He was there till after Christmas, when he rallied again and grew much better.

Early in 1878 he received the following in-

¹ Westland Marston, and Henry Marston the actor.

teresting letter from his old friend Thomas Cooper, to whom he had sent "Frances Spira":—

"New Year's Day, 1878.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Your letter reached me at Leeds, while in the midst of such excitement as I have not experienced for years. Sceptics crowded the lecture-room *to suffocation*, challenged me to debate, and were only appeased by my telling them it was too late in life for me to enter into a scrimmage, and that suppose they got the victory, there would be but a small triumph in saying, 'We have beaten an old fellow of seventy-three.' Next at York—solemn stiff old York!—the excitement was nearly as great. Everywhere the question is agitating the people, Are we God-made men or improved monkeys? At Scarborough the excitement was greater. What with visitors in the daytime at my lodgings, written queries to answer, and the excitement of crowded nights, I was so full of hurry-scurry, that scores of things were neglected that I wished to attend to; and so, my dear friend, I regret *you* were unanswered. In spite of all the excitement I got through my work week by week so bravely that old friends cry, 'Cooper, you cannot be seventy-three; you must be growing young again.' Alas! how frail is man! Before I could finish my work at Scarbro' I was stricken with that fell bronchitis. I got away to Bridlington Quay on the last day of November, and *there* I was shut up for three weeks! I really thought I should have gone to heaven the first week, it was such hard work to live.

"Thank God I recovered, and proceeded hither slowly just before Christmas. By good nursing and observance of my doctor's advice, I am now so far recovered that I have

engaged to preach at Gainsbro' next Sunday, and to go back to Hull and fulfil my broken engagement there the following week.

"I ought to be very thankful that I am not on a sick-bed like yourself, but feel again all the old glow of health, and the old fervid desire to be in the fight again for Christ's truth. I may be wrong in my estimate, but I think Christianity was never in such peril as now. This determined and united conspiracy against it of *the men of science*, the cowardly yielding clergymen, even of many dissenting ministers, the ready hearing that all sorts of people seem to give to the tale that we are only improved apes, and that there is no hereafter and no accountability, and the poor, lame, ignorant attempts made at defending the truth, are to me appalling.

"During the last century, in this country at least, Churchmen defended Christianity nobly and triumphantly. *Now* they go trembling about the task, if they venture to attempt it; while many openly declare they are either already on the side of the enemy, or are preparing to cross over to him. *O tempora, O mores!* What can *we* do? *Fight*—to the last gasp, and then leave the fight to others, for whom the battle may be long and sore; but they shall shout 'Victory!' at last. Excuse this long prate, and believe me, your loving friend,

THOMAS COOPER."

One of the last letters my father wrote was to E. Marston, of the firm of Sampson Low, Marston, & Co., who was ill at this time; and it ran thus:—

"Feb. 1, 1878.

"MY VERY DEAR MARSTON,—God bless you with good sense and good health. Abstain from all stimulants till

the cough is gone. A neglected cold and a determination to work ruined me; and our vicar, only a fortnight ill, who has thrice given me the sacrament *in extremis*, now lies given over, through cold. You are too valuable and good a fellow to go to Davy's Locker yet.

"Things are bad, but I am jolly. . . . I am doing a book on 'Authors and Authorship,' anecdotal, monitorial, &c., like the 'Professor at the Breakfast Table'—it is good, I can tell you.

"I have had an invite from Chatto & Windus—a rattling firm that. Had a letter from the master of Merchant Taylors' School, awful complimentary, saying he has put the Bayard historical books and literary in the school library. You see God struck me with ill-health, and I never had friends who would throw on the limelight; and I would not write on Balmoral boots and do Leicester Square literature!

"Where is the cheap G. L.? I have eight or nine stunning ideas, waiting strength and an amanuensis. Been very bad; got over it. 'My strength is as the strength of ten' somehow. The neighbouring undertaker has given me up, looks black at me; 'five summers and five long autumns have gone swiftly by,' and the green grass has ripened o'er the spot where lies my peaceful grave! and this I owe (under God's providence) to constant care and good nursing, with a quiet pipe, and to a mind at ease. If thy fate be mine, bear it, and so fare-thee-well!"

He was much better, and we began to hope again that he might yet live a few years.

On the 5th of February the vicar died, and the news of his death shocked and grieved my father.

He could not go to his funeral, which was very largely attended—everybody, especially those who had found the most fault, extolling him to the skies. A few days passed, and we heard of the death of Mr. Sellwood, our family doctor, who had attended my father for many years, and used, as well as the physician, to come down to Bexley when he was very bad. The deaths of the vicar and the doctor, two people who had so often ministered unto him in his extremity, could not fail to sadden and distress him. It seemed marvellous to him that he should have outlived them ; but it was only for a little while.

On Saturday the 9th of March it was very bright, and on the terrace at Fair-Home warm and sunny. My father went for a little walk, but when we reached the village there was an east wind blowing which we had not felt in our sheltered lane. We turned back directly and went home. In the evening Mr. Gilbert Wood and his wife came to tea. My father was wonderfully well and cheerful—they told me afterwards how well they thought him looking—and we all began to hope he would have a better year. But that night hemorrhage came on very slightly ; it continued all Sunday. On Monday he looked very ill, and

the doctor seemed anxious and gave him some brandy, as he complained of feeling cold. On Tuesday he seemed a little better, and in the afternoon talked a little. It was a most beautiful afternoon, the sun streaming over the Heath and the garden and shining into his room. He could see from his bed the glorious view, and every change and shadow across fourteen miles of country. My mother never left his room, and I was there. We talked about the view. I remember he said that one of his doctors had remarked "it was a pleasant room to be ill in," but "he was tired of it; it was a pretty house and a healthy place, but he had been so ill he was tired of it all, and if he got well he should leave." Then we talked about where we should go, and at five o'clock I went down to make tea. I took some up to my mother and father, and left them comfortably having it. Harry and I were at ours in the dining-room when we heard the bell ringing sharply; we rushed upstairs, only to find that hemorrhage had come on again. My father gasped "Vinegar, vinegar" (which we used to give him when we had no ice). I handed him some in a cup, but he could not drink it, and gave it me back; then he turned his face to my mother and shut his eyes. When the doctor came with

my brother he was quite dead, his head on my shoulder, his hand clasped in my mother's. The sunshine was flooding the room with its dying glory, and my father looked as if he were quietly asleep.

In Crayford churchyard, a charming spot standing high on a hill, and about two miles from Fair-Home, we buried him. The funeral was very quiet; we did not advertise it at all; and Mr. Stevens, Mr. William Stevens, a few private friends, and the family were all that followed him to the grave.

There were many kindly notices in the papers, notably some charming "In Memoriam" verses by Miss Sarah Doudney in *The Pictorial World*. In *The Family Herald* they spoke of "his manliness, earnestness, purity, and depth of feeling, his gentleness and devotedness, and his Christian piety as shown in his writings." Even Mr. Sala, in *The Illustrated London News*, said: "I have never wavered in my admiration for his abilities, and my esteem for his truly blameless personal character." It may be asked then, why did he attack him (years after his death) as he did in his book?

My father's motto, "Patience and Faith," was an admirable index of his life: patience in the

endurance of much suffering from ill-health and in the constant discharge of duty; faith, the guiding principle of his existence. In his poem on "The Death of the Drama" he says:—

"Yet were thy part or great or poor,
Still acted well with earnest mind;
In life's renewal thou shalt find
A peace to last for evermore."

That he did his best to act his part well, his life and his writings show; and I have only to add, in his own words, written of another life not unlike his own:—

"If to love what is noble and good, and to be beloved by what is noble and good; to grow up in reverence and honour, and to die before the dreary age comes; to be fairly and honourably successful, and to be beloved and mourned, is not a lyric life, we do not know what is; and even comparing it with higher levels, it is, we hope, a grand, happy, English life, leading, in God's mercy, to a happier life beyond."

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